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EDMONTON'S 100% INDEPENDENT NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

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VUEWEEKLY.COM FREE

# VUEWEEKLY



## HUNGRY FOR CHANGE

FRANCES MOORE LAPPÉ SPEAKS AT INTERNATIONAL WEEK

ARTS: THE ADVANTAGED / 21 FILM: THE CLASS / 25 MUSIC: RED SHAG CARPET / 31



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ON THE COVER



**FOOD CRISIS** 7

Frances Moore Lappé comes to the University of Alberta's International Week to discuss what is wrong with the way the world eats, and how we can fix it.

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# That ain't fine

BRYAN BIRTLES / bryan@vueweekly.com

It's not a crime to be poor, but it may as well be. The Edmonton Police Commission has recommended that city council pass a bylaw amendment that would prohibit panhandlers from "obstructing, intimidating or making contact with other people, continuing to ask for money once they have been refused, or seeking handouts when they are drunk or stoned," according to the *Edmonton Journal*. Apparently the police commission—and Mayor Mandel by publicly agreeing with the recommendations—thinks that passing a law directed at the most vulnerable and least likely people to follow the law will work.

Where is the deterrent, exactly? If you look at the situation as a cost versus benefit proposition, it just doesn't add up. Aggressive panhandling might net someone a couple extra dollars that they wouldn't have received otherwise, or it might net them a fine which they can't—and won't—pay. Too many unpaid fines, and they'll spend a few days in jail. Is there a difference between prison and the street? Sure. Both are dangerous, one is warm.

The problem with criminalizing behaviour like aggressive panhandling—behaviour which is troubling, in some cases despicable, and which should be stopped—is that the very groups trying to criminalize it are the ones who caused the problems in the first place. If they took the steps necessary to address the roots of the problem, there would be no need to pass out tickets to people living on the edge of survival.

Remember in the mid-'90s when we had all of those civic budgets with no tax increases? Did you think the cost of living wasn't going up? Did you think the cost of providing services to the people of Edmonton wasn't going up? So where did all that money come from? From the ultimate buzzword of mid-'90s Alberta: cutbacks. Where do cutbacks happen? To the people with the least voice, people living on the edge. Instead of fining panhandlers—who aren't going to pay anyway—perhaps the city should be opening up more shelter beds, providing funding for groups that work with the homeless and get them off the street, providing incentives to developers to provide low income housing, putting up the money to build their own low income housing.

Fining people for being poor? That's pathetic. ▼



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## MAIL LETTERS

### DISSENT NOT A CRIME, BUT CRIME IS

Connie Howard wrote in her column Well, Well, Well ("Different paths deserve same respect," Jan 15 - Jan 25, 2009) that, "Choosing a path that deviates from the pharmaceutical one and talking about the unresolved mysteries and contradictions of the disease isn't a crime."

I agree wholeheartedly. I would even argue that examining and questioning a medical paradigm is a fundamental right and a healthy choice.

However, this is not the only choice that Ms Maggiore and other HIV/AIDS dissidents have made. Many of them have made the choice not to inform their sexual partners of their positive status, because "HIV doesn't exist, and I don't have it anyway." They have chosen not to practise safer sex. They have chosen to get pregnant, breastfeed and refrain from having their children tested for HIV. They have chosen to help other HIV-positive people do the same.

These choices are crimes. It's time to stop patting dissidents on the back for their free thinking and confront the dangers of some of their choices. Opinion pieces such as yours are being used to

prop up the dissidents' choices; I found yours on David Crowe's Reappraising AIDS Alberta website.

SM ELLIOTT

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

With all of the buzz about infrastructure projects leading up to the federal budget one thing that should be looked at is housing.

The lack of affordable housing is a big issue for many families throughout Canada. What I propose is a plan to address the shortage. Since the government is looking for projects that have either an immediate effect or long-term benefit, my plan has both.

I live in Topaz Heights, which is a neighbourhood in Victoria that was built after the Second World War to provide housing for the returning veterans and their families.

The houses were solidly built and modest in size by today's standards. The building lots were smaller and there was a shared driveway between them. The houses were 760 square feet per floor before additions. As their families grew in size so did the houses. Today the average size is about 1000 sq ft per floor.

If we are serious about tackling the issue of affordable housing we need to be realistic about expectations. By building smaller houses on smaller lots, families will have smaller mortgages. By building on a 5000 sq ft lot instead of a

7500 sq ft lot we can provide 50 per cent more units for the same amount of land.

By building simpler buildings we can provide a higher quality and more consistent product. The simpler designs are easier to incorporate energy efficiency and sustainability than today's large houses. As well, the straightforward plans would give less experienced construction workers employment. The projects could happen in all areas of Canada, providing opportunities to keep people working while at the same time providing much needed housing.

It was a successful strategy 60 years ago that addressed a very serious housing shortage. Given the economic challenges that the world faces in the foreseeable future, Canada could use this opportunity to improve its housing stock. It would provide immediate benefits in all areas of Canada, provide employment and support the forestry industry. This is what is meant by sustainable development.

FRED MALLACH, VICTORIA

*Vue Weekly welcomes reader response, whether critical or complimentary. Send your opinion by mail (Vue Weekly, 10303 - 108 Street, Edmonton AB T5J 1L7), by fax (780.426.2889) or by email (letters@vueweekly.com). Preference is given to feedback about articles in Vue Weekly. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity.*



# Empowerment needed

Francis Moore Lappé  
brings living democracy

BRYAN BIRTLES / bryan@vuwweekly.com

As climate change continues to affect the entire planet, as peace becomes harder and harder to find and as power coalesces with a select few, access to food will become the issue that defines our time. More than anything else, human civilization depends on food to keep it going. As Ronald Wright put forth in *A Short History of Progress*, civilizations rise and fall on the availability of food, and the availability of food is connected to a myriad of factors.

Sorting through these factors is the University of Alberta's International Week keynote speaker **Frances Moore Lappé**. The recipient of 17 honorary doctorates and author of 16 books, including her newest, *Getting A Grip: Clarity, Creativity and Courage in a World Gone Mad*, Lappé has spent her life trying to decipher why hunger exists in the world. A proponent of what she calls "living democracy," Lappé believes that hunger comes not from a lack of food, but from a lack of power. In 2002, her and her daughter Anna founded the Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Small Planet Institute. Recently she took the time to speak with *Vue* about her upcoming address at the U of A.

**VUE WEEKLY:** I would be remiss if I didn't ask you about the new American President Barack Obama. Do you expect that he will help America deal with some of the root causes of the food crisis?

**FRANCES MOORE LAPPÉ:** I am filled with hope and filled with fear and I talk about both a lot. About him as a human being I have no reservations—about his integrity and his brilliance and his courage and all the things I've never in my almost 65 years imagined in an American president. In terms of the qualities of character that are essential to real leadership, the depth of compassion in his own life and the choices that he has made reflect core human values that I share, and on all of that I have only admiration and hope.

My fear is very much connected to the message of my talk, and that fear is the double edge—because he is such an extraordinary leader in all the positive meanings of that leadership, that people will somehow think that basically our government structures are working and all we have to do is get through this rough patch of eight years of bad leadership and we'll be OK. I have such a profoundly different

perspective that the underlying governance structures of our society and therefore our economy—which is shaped powerfully by political governance—are fundamentally anti-democratic, fundamentally anti-life, that they continue to concentrate power.

**PREVIEW** MON, FEB 2 (12 PM)  
**FRANCES MOORE LAPPÉ**  
KEYNOTE FOR U OF A'S INTERNATIONAL WEEK  
HOBOWITZ THEATRE

**VW:** You've also argued that free market economics concentrates power in a way that causes hunger. How does the free market do that?

**FML:** The market only serves life if it is embedded in a truly democratic government system so that it is set within rules that continue to disperse power, [but] the logic of the market is to concentrate wealth. I call it the one rule of economics, which is "highest return to existing wealth." That's the way we set up our market system and that one rule means that the market is run by a principle diametrically the opposite of the principle of democracy, which is the widest dispersion of power so that we all have a voice. That's the definition of democracy for me.

**VW:** What would it take to have more dispersion of power, more people participating in the market?

**FML:** You can't participate in the market if you have no money, and what is it that keeps wealth circulating? Well, we've certainly seen in the last 30 years in the US what keeps it concentrating, but what keeps it circulating is what happened after World War II, when the bottom 20 per cent of Americans increased their real family income by 116 per cent between the 1940s and the 1970s. There was this enormous benefit, every class advanced, but it was the lowest 20 per cent that advanced the most. Then you think of what's happened since then—it's exactly the opposite, it's completely turned on its head.

I argue that you don't need to have a PhD to know how to create a democratic economy that allows everybody to participate in it. The kinds of things that we were doing such as the GI Bill that allowed people who didn't have wealth to get a college education—now in the US the cost of a college education has skyrocketed. Access to health care—how can you earn a living if you don't have health? A true

living wage—our minimum wage in the US, even after this recent increase, is still much lower than it was in real terms 20 years ago. Unions—there's this attack in the US consistently in the last 30 years making it harder for unions to organize and we know that people who are part of unions on average make 25 per cent more than those who aren't. So I'm sure we can do a lot of creative things that we just haven't thought of yet, but we have a record, we know what it takes to end poverty—in the US we reduced the poverty rate by 60 per cent in the 1960s. In some ways it's common sense.

**VW:** It would seem that the food crisis is connected to a number of other factors—climate change, for instance. Ethanol fuel has been heralded in this province as a solution to climate change, but you've argued against it. Why is that?

**FML:** In my book *Getting a Grip* I ask us to put on a pair of glasses that sees the world through power. Power is one of those words that send chills down peoples spines, but power is just our capacity to act, and hunger is a product of a power imbalance in human relationships. Likewise, agrifuels are a result of power imbalances in human relationships. What I mean by that is I bet you no citizens are rising up in Canada saying, "Yes, yes, yes, I think it's a good idea to divert good farm land to produce something to fuel automobiles, I think it's great to have more pressure on our food prices, more pressure on our land." From all the research I've done—and I'm not an expert on the research on this but I've seen studies that show

[that] in terms of benefit to the environment there is none—it might even be a negative. It's not a green technology.

If this had been a part of a popular debate about what makes sense for the use of our land, I just don't think it would have had a chance of going through, but because of the power of concentrated corporate wealth—agribusiness spent a billion dollars lobbying over 10 years—it's a reflection of an anti-democratic decision making process and that's what worries me about it. Because how can we address climate change if we're still subsidizing fossil fuels? We've got to have the courage to look underneath, at the power relationships and empowerment of citizens, because unless we step forward and remove the role of corporate power in our political decision making we can't end hunger and we can't avert climate change.

**VW:** In *Getting a Grip* you talk about the need to shift the frames we look at the world through in order to see the solutions to this crisis. What frames are you talking about?

**FML:** The fundamental frame that I think is doing humanity in, because this frame is spreading throughout the planet now and it's the frame that most of us grow up with in the global

north, is the frame of scarcity—scarcity of goods and scarcity of goodness. What I mean by that is that there's not enough of anything, there's not enough food, so that's the cause of hunger. And there's not enough goodness—we grow up believing that we're just these selfish little materialists out for our own best interests. If you believe in both of these scarcities then you believe that we're really incapable of genuine democracy and it's best that we do turn over our fate to an impersonal force—the market—that works on its own, and to the expert leader whether it be a George Bush or a Barack Obama. My shift of frame is not to say, "Oh yes! Human beings are good and there's endless abundance," but to say that there is plenty of each. In other words, the fundamental shift of frame has to be that humans are intensely complex and we know enough now to know that there are strong, strong needs that are pro-social—our need for cooperation, our capacity for empathy, our need for fairness and our need for power. These things we can count on as well as our obvious cruelty for each other. The fundamental frame in *Getting a Grip* and that all my talking and writing is about is how do we shift from this frame of scarcity of goods and goodness to a frame of possibility where we understand that human beings are both: we can be incredibly cruel and we can be incredibly cooperative and fair. So the question is, what are the rules that we put in place that bring out the best in us? ▼



# Obamahalo!

## Obama's inauguration, Hawaiian style

XANTHE COUTURE / xantho@vancouverweekly.com

A winter escape to Hawaii seems like the farthest away you can get from politics, but the laid-back surfer attitude of Hawaii is now the latest formula for creating American presidential candidates.

A walk along the palm tree-lined sandy shores of Waikiki Beach at sunset on January 20 meant catching glimpses of an inauguration ball at the recently refurbished Royal Hawaiian Hotel. Once one of the only hotels along the shoreline, the flamingo-pink relic transformed into an outdoor schmooze fest with Hawaii's Democratic elite. All for the bargain price of \$250 per person or \$1000 for a VIP ticket.

For those who wanted to party in the style of the new political era of revived grassroots democracy, there was the free admission Aloha Obama Inauguration Party on the waterfront of the Aloha Tower at Honolulu Harbor.

Political junkies could dine on ahi tuna and crab cakes, sip on drinks, get a T-shirt depicting their local body boarding President riding the waves all while watching Obama's Inauguration replay on a big screen and listening to a DJ set.

Louis Erteschik, a staff attorney for the Hawaii Disability Rights Center and his wife came out to celebrate Obama's victory, even though Denis Kucinich had been his first pick early on in the race.

"I'm excited. I am thrilled, but also cautiously optimistic," he says. "I am really proud because he is from our neighbourhood. Punahou School [Obama's former high school] is right down the street from us."

The Punahou School marching band was featured in the inaugural parade, something Obama acknowledged with none other than a shaka sign—a traditional island greeting where the pinkie and the thumb extend outwards—that did not go unnoticed by locals.

Erteschik, a New York native, believes the influence of growing up in Honolulu had an even greater impact on the 44th President beyond infusing White House protocol with surf culture.

"There is a lot of 'Aloha' in him," he says.

When prodded further about how

"Aloha" spirit translates into political know-how, Erteschik explains that it simply means respect for everyone.

"Inclusiveness is the local way to try and find a consensus," he says. "Which is a humungous departure from last eight years."

"Obama is a matter-of-fact guy and the more input he gets from different kinds of people the better. He is a president for everybody," Erteschik says.

"The world already sees us differently now that we have elected him. We used to pretend that we were from Canada—now we don't have to," he jokes.

**TRACKING DOWN** one of the two organizers of the event would lead to Henk B Rogers, someone who one Obama campaigner said was the inventor of *Tetris*.

Rogers shrugs off the impressive title and clarifies that he only owns exclusive business rights to the game. His concerns are more wrapped up in bigger social issues like how to encourage an end to the United States's reliance on non-renewable energy sources.

When asked why he decided to rent out a space and organize a free admission inaugural party, Rogers reflects back on the night Obama won the election when he and a friend watched the results in an empty bar.

"One of the problems is, because of the time differences, by the time the results get to Hawaii, it's already decided."

Rogers is well aware of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel Democratic fundraising machine down at Waikiki Beach, which he jokingly describes as the "politburo," adding, "That engine has to be there doing its thing."

Yet he felt differently about what an Obama inauguration party could be. "It should be for the young people—that is who elected him."

"This is the inauguration for the next generation," he says.

Rogers' hopes for Obama lie with his strong belief in ending the United States' addiction to fossil fuels. "If you can end this country's addiction to fossil fuel," he says, "you will be the greatest president ever."

"We don't have time for backwards thinking, we have to move on," he adds. "Obama is exactly the guy at exactly the right time." ▀

VIEW WEEKLY

# ISSUES

Issues is a forum for individuals and organizations to comment on current events and broader issues of importance to the community. Their commentary is not necessarily the opinion of the organization they represent or of View Weekly.

## Gold Bar issue skewed by EPCOR

RICARDO ACUÑA / ralbarto.ca/parkland

Last week, after more than a full day of presentations, questions and information, and after wading through hundreds of pages of reports and financial projections, Edmonton city council voted seven to six in favour of selling the Gold Bar Wastewater Treatment Plant to EPCOR for the price of \$75 million.

The fact that city council took this decision very seriously was demonstrated by the fact that they agreed to hold a public hearing on the question, but also by the amount of information they requested about the sale and the number of questions they asked everyone who presented on the issue.

It was also encouraging to see the number of Edmontonians who actually made their way to City Hall on a work day to present their views on the sale of the plant. Most of the people who presented had nothing to personally gain from the decision one way or the other, but they took the time to present because they are passionate about their city, their public services and the public interest.

Likewise, the unions, citizens groups and environmental organizations that came together to oppose the sale under the banner of Keep Drainage Edmonton did a remarkable job of presenting important facts and data about the deal, without ever reverting to mud-slinging, innuendo, or fear-mongering about the consequences.

In the end, clearly enough councilors felt that this was a good deal for the city, and that the \$75 million in revenue was enough to compensate for whatever negative consequences the deal might bring. Time will tell if they were right in their assessment.

Time will also tell if the promises made by EPCOR about staffing, environmental standards, rates and projected dividends to the city will come to pass. Edmontonians would do well to monitor the activities of EPCOR and the Gold Bar plant closely in the next few years.

It is likely only a matter of time before EPCOR makes a move on some other part of Edmonton's currently public infrastructure, most likely the remainder of drainage services, and their track record with Gold Bar will be an important part of that future debate.

As EPCOR continues the process of expanding its business to municipalities across North America, it is also important for Edmontonians to keep in mind



what that looks like for people in those communities. Privatization of utilities is rarely well-received by the population at large, and well-organized and powerful fight-backs in places like Stockton, Halifax and Nanaimo rarely shine a good light on the image and reputation of the privatizing company or its owners. With EPCOR, we are the owners, and the more places EPCOR goes, the more likely we are to be seen as callous and greedy privatizers of public services for the sake of our own profit.

I know we don't look at ourselves that way, but how would we feel if a company like Vivendi or Bechtel moved into Edmonton and began privatizing our public services for the sake of their profit?

**THERE IS ONE MORE** aspect of this entire process that has left an uneasy feeling in the pit of my stomach. When it comes to making a decision such as this, city council has a responsibility to base its decision on the best information possible and their assessment of the cases presented by proponents, opponents and the citizenry at large.

It is the role, in such a process, of city administration to ensure that council has all the information it needs in order to properly assess the information provided by both sides of the debate and to make an informed and proper decision in the public interest.

In this case, however, city administration was anything but a provider of impartial and complete information to city council. In fact, more often than not, it seemed like administration reps were acting as spokespeople for EPCOR in trying to promote their case.

A good example was the day that Keep Drainage Edmonton held their press conference at City Hall to launch their publicity campaign and explain their opposition to the deal. When the press conference was over, it was not

an EPCOR spokesperson that presented their position to the media, but rather Lorna Rosen of the city's Asset Management and Public Works Department.

Likewise, in the initial report presented by admin to council recommending the sale, all of the data, figures and projections seemed to have been prepared by EPCOR and presented as truth. This is not to suggest that EPCOR would lie, but rather to point out that admin made absolutely no effort to assess, interpret or critique the information.

The City of Edmonton Employee Code of Conduct opens with the statement that "[e]mployees must perform their duties in an impartial and responsible manner that maintains and enhances public confidence and trust." A public servant who took that code seriously would therefore take it upon themselves to provide the elected reps with an impartial assessment of the proposed deal, with well-thought out alternative options for consideration, and with a detailed list of pros and cons (not just pros).

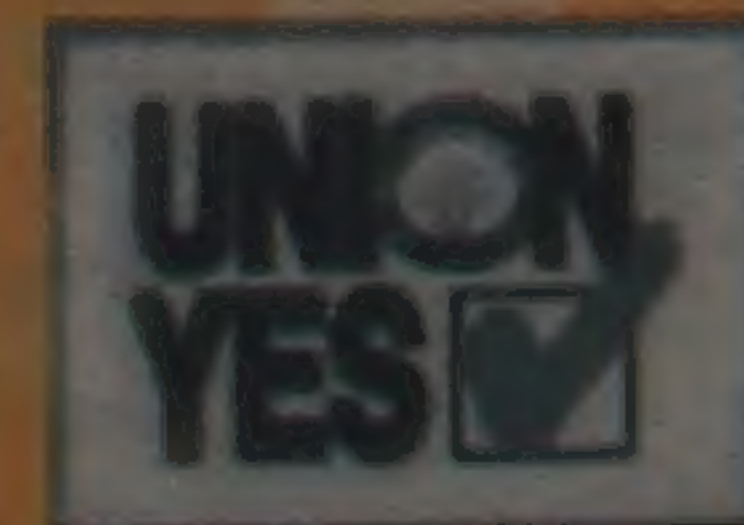
As I said above, although I disagree with their ultimate decision, I believe individual councilors took this question seriously and acted according to what they felt was in the public interest. It is difficult however, as an activist citizen, to take the process seriously when the party with the most to gain from the deal has such privileged and direct access to the folks advising the councilors on the deal.

If the Employee Code of Conduct is to be taken seriously, and the city is genuine about wanting to maintain and enhance public confidence and trust, then the role of city admin in this instance needs to be closely examined and necessary changes made. The city's credibility depends on it. ▀

Ricardo Acuña is executive director of the Parkland Institute, a non-partisan public policy research institute housed at the University of Alberta.

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# Multi-racial Britain

**COMMENT** **DYER STRAIGHT**  
GWYNNE DYER  
gwynne@vuwweekly.com

If you are the head of something called the Equality and Human Rights Commission, your job is to complain about the racism, gender discrimination and general unfairness of the society you live in. So Trevor Phillips, the chairman of Britain's E&HRC, broke with tradition when he said last week that Britain is "by far—and I mean by far—the best place in Europe to live if you are not white."

Phillips, whose own heritage is black Caribbean, made his remarks on the 10th anniversary of a report on the murder of a young black Londoner, Stephen Lawrence, that condemned the police as "institutionally racist." So they were, at the time—but having lived in London half my life, I think Phillips is right. Things have changed.

Lucinda Platt of the Institute of Social and Economic Research at Essex University thinks so too. She has just published a report revealing that one in five children in Britain now belongs to an ethnic minority—and one in ten lives in a mixed-race family. The first statistic might merely confirm Enoch Powell's fears of 40 years ago. The second proves that he was utterly wrong.

Enoch Powell was the Conservative politician who made a famous speech in 1968 predicting race war if the United Kingdom did not stop non-white immigration from the former empire. He dressed it up with quotes from the classics, but the message was plain: "As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding. Like the Roman, I seem to see 'the River Tiber foaming with much blood.'"

"That tragic and intractable phenomenon which we watch with horror on the other side of the Atlantic," Powell went on, referring to the race riots that devastated many large American cities after the assassination of Dr Martin Luther King Jr, "... is coming upon us here by our own volition and our own neglect. Indeed, it has all but come. In numerical terms, (the non-white part of the British population) will be of American proportions long before the end of the century. Only resolute and urgent action will avert it even now."

Powell was promptly expelled from the shadow cabinet, but an opinion poll soon afterwards showed that 74 per cent of the British population shared his fears. The general opinion at the time in Europe, based mainly on observation of the American experience, was that different races could not live comfortably together.

**FAST FORWARD** 40 years, and Britain is more or less as Powell predicted: the proportion of non-whites among its citizens is almost the same as it is in the United States. But the next generation of British

are not fighting each other, as Powell predicted; they are marrying each other.

Among British children who have an Indian heritage, 11 per cent live in families with one white parent. Among kids with a Chinese heritage, 35 per cent have one white parent. Among children with a black Caribbean heritage, 49 per cent do. Including my next-door neighbours.

Among Muslim Britons the rate is much lower (only four per cent for kids of Pakistani heritage), but the younger generation of British people is largely blind to ethnicity, religious differences, all the old shibboleths. And apart from some former mill towns where unskilled immigrants from a single ethnic group confront the old white working class, both of them now unemployed, there are few racially segregated ghettos in Britain.

Of London's 32 boroughs, none is less than 10 per cent non-white. Only three reach 50 per cent, and those just barely. Despite the happily-ever-after inauguration of Barack Obama, the urban scene in New York, Los Angeles or Chicago is dramatically different.

This does not prove that British people are more virtuous than Americans. It just shows that people of different races can live comfortably together, can even come to see race as essentially irrelevant to their choice of mate, *provided that there is no heritage of race-based slavery.*

The French "race riots" of 2005 and 2007 occasioned much discussion of France's failure to integrate its immigrants, but lots of angry white kids took part in those riots too. The same was true of the Brixton "race riots" in London in 1981. They were actually anti-police riots, and whites were welcome to join. Many did.

Eastern Europe is different: it has far fewer non-whites, and so it is far more racist. But Britain, and to a lesser extent France, are rather like Canada, another country that was 98 per cent white only 50 years ago, but now has a racial diversity that equals or exceeds that of the United States. Yet it simply isn't an issue for most of the young. Indeed, London and Toronto are probably the two best cities in the world in which to bring up mixed-race kids.

None of this detracts from the historic achievement of Americans in electing a black (well, all right, mixed-race) president. It's just to say that it was much harder to do that in the United States because of the malign influence of history.

All the more credit to Americans for doing it anyway. And full marks to the British and the Canadians for showing that race really doesn't matter when history doesn't get in the way. ▽

*Gwynne Dyer is a London-based independent journalist whose articles are published in 45 countries. His column appears each week in Vue Weekly.*

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- Photographic Technology
- Radio and Television

##### Hospitality and Culinary Arts

- Baking
- Culinary Arts
- Hospitality Management
- Retail Meatcutting

#### TUESDAY FEBRUARY 10

##### Engineering Technologies and Applied Sciences

- Bachelor of Technology in Technology Management
- Biological Sciences Technology
- Biomedical Engineering Technology
- Building Environmental Systems Technology and HVAC
- Chemical Engineering Technology
- Chemical Technology
- Forest Technology
- Geological Technology
- Industrial Heavy Equipment Technology
- Instrumentation Engineering Technology
- Materials Engineering Technology
- Mechanical Engineering Technology
- Petroleum Engineering Technology
- Power Engineering 3rd Class, 4th Class and Power Engineering Technology

##### I.T. and Electronics

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- Bachelor of Applied Information Systems Technology
- Computer Engineering Technology
- Computer Network Administrator
- Computer Systems Technology
- Electrical Engineering Technology
- Electronics Engineering Technology
- Network Engineering Technology
- Telecommunications Engineering Technology

#### WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 11

##### Building Construction and Design

- Architectural Technology
- Civil Engineering Technology
- Construction Engineering Technology
- Engineering Design and Drafting Technology
- Interior Design Technology
- Landscape Architectural Technology
- Millwork and Carpentry

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- Geomatics (Surveying) Engineering Technology
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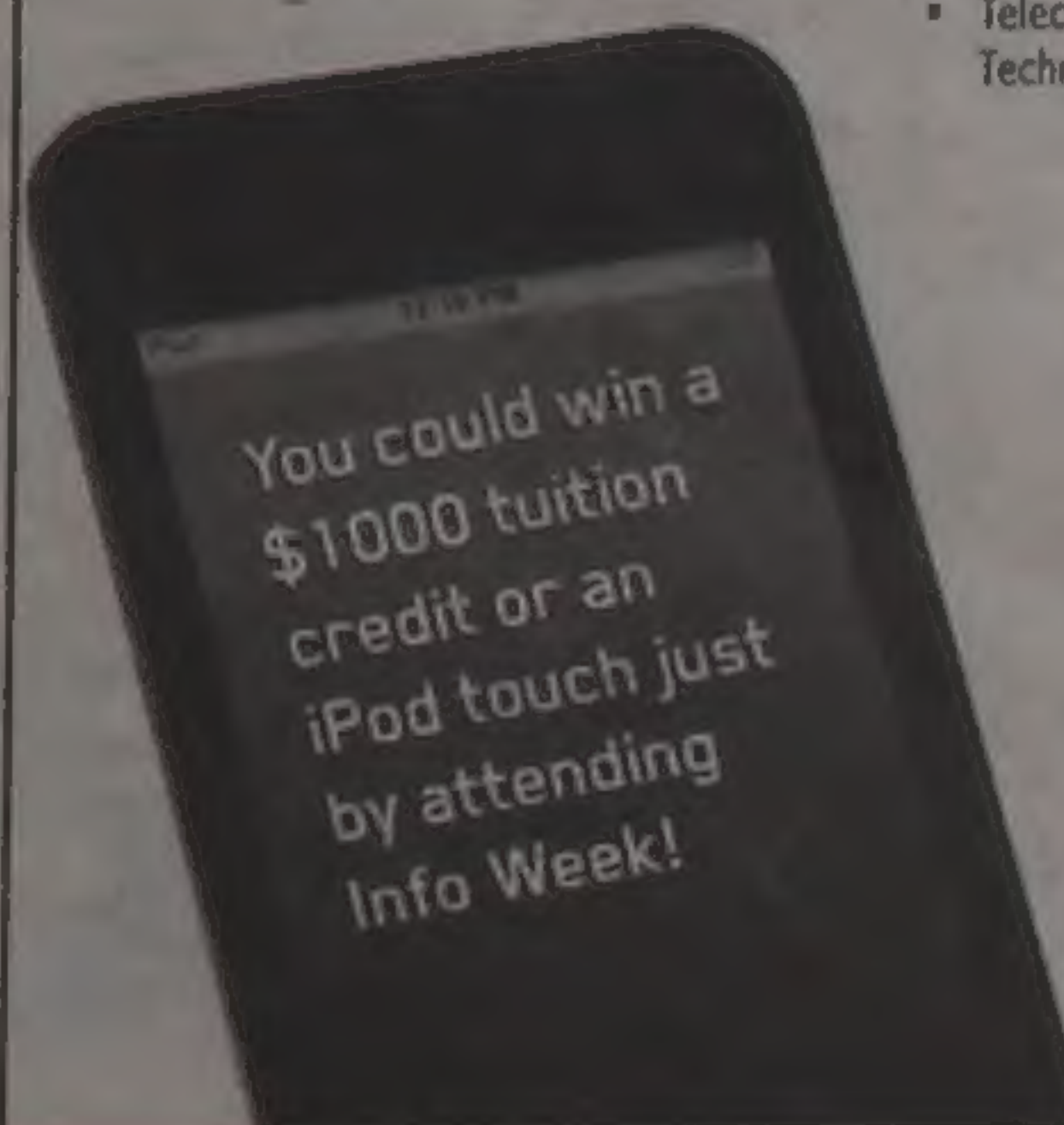
#### THURSDAY FEBRUARY 12

##### Animal Studies

- Animal Health Technology
- Veterinary Administrative Assistant

##### Health Sciences

- Bachelor of Technology in Technology Management
- Biomedical Engineering Technology
- Combined Laboratory and X-Ray Technology
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My Life Would Suck Without You
- 6 Buckcherry  
Don't Go Away
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# Vaccine debate not over

**WELL, WELL, WELL**  
CONNIE HOWARD  
health@vviewweekly.com

January is cervical cancer awareness month in the US now, but didn't we just finish an entire year of cervical cancer awareness?

We've been subjected to full-page newspaper announcements about Gardasil winning the Prix Galien Canada 2008 Innovative Product Award, for "making the most significant overall contribution to patient care in Canada." We've heard endless messages of "proven safety," and of "no evidence of a causal relationship between the vaccine and the adverse events being reported." (Tell that to those who were well one day, and not the day after their shot, and still not many months later, and tell them it is sometimes necessary to sacrifice the well-being of some for the benefit of the majority.)

Not that the benefit to the majority is all that clear. Because despite the major public relations campaign, many—parents, doctors, microbiologists and immunologists alike—remain unconvinced that Gardasil is a good idea. And many feel strongly that over-immunization of our children in general is playing a major role in autoimmune disease.

Resistance to vaccination programs is generally met with accusations of irresponsibility, and with assumptions that motive is rooted in an outdated moral code or hatred of women. The response to those who report the facts about harm done and potential danger is typically a version of, "What is it with you people that you deny young women the right to live free of cervical cancer?"

But reporting the facts isn't irresponsible. And the fact is that though industry has deemed the vaccine safe and conducted an extensive public relations campaign, not everyone is convinced. The facts are that the research was done by those who stand to gain magnificently,



that it has been subjected to little independent scientific review, that drug companies are known for spinning or withholding unfavourable information, that some very serious adverse events are occurring, and that the true risk of cervical cancer has been inflated.

**THE LESS PRETTY** and underreported aspects of the issue are vital to good public health policy, and it is the silencing of dialogue—the insistence that the debate is over when it isn't—that is in fact irresponsible.

And despite appearances of concern for women's health, medicine is industry. Merck has no new cholesterol drugs due to be launched anytime soon, their shares are down more than 50 per cent over the past year, and they need growth. They've put a new executive at the helm of the Gardasil ship, and from a memo distributed to Merck executives (reported in *Forbes*), we know that the reason behind the change has everything to do with sales and growth.

To add yet another current to the maelstrom, the Nobel Prize Committee—which awarded the Nobel Prize in Medicine for 2008 to German scientist Harald zur Hausen for his work linking HPV to cervical cancer—

may be facing an investigation of bribery for allegedly taking payments from the drug company that own the patents and collects royalties on both HPV vaccines. AstraZeneca has of course denied the charges, even though they did give a large sum of money to Nobel-affiliated corporations to spread the word about the "HPV medical breakthrough", and even though they did have a company rep on the board that votes on candidates for the Nobel Prize in Medicine.

Economics and potential corruption aside, there are still the basics. From an FDA document we know that "identifying and typing HPV infection does not bear a direct relationship to stratification of the risk for cervical cancer. Most acute infections caused by HPV are self-limiting. It is the persistent HPV infection that may act as a tumor promoter in cancer induction ... most infections are short-lived and not associated with cervical cancer."

Other major risk factors such as smoking—which depresses immune function and has been shown to double our risk—will continue to receive scant attention, and Merck will continue to use fear to push their product. They've been denied approval for its use in women over 26, but they're working on approval for use in boys. **v**

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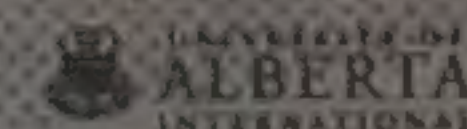
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# Neo-nostalgia

GAMES

## INFINITE LIVES

DARREN ZENKO  
infinite\_lives@vceweekly.com

My computer sits on the same desk in the same room, in the same house where my younger self spent thousands of hours of youth hours in front of his first computer. This desk; the desk I'm sitting at now. When we got that Tandy 1000 in 1984, it came with a dad-stipulated "no games" rule, a rule that was first eroded by keeping "educational games" exempt, and then completely obliterated by the family handing off massive stacks of bulk-copied floppies. From then on, this desk was my portal into the multi-coloured world of 16 colour digital fantasy.

Today, a sunny and frigid wintertime Saturday like so many spent in starlight,

crypt-delving and chopper-piloting, I'm thinking specifically of two favorites of that time: the Epyx edition of seminal dungeon-crawl *Rogue*, and Broderbund's *Lode Runner*. On the screen in front of me is Derek Yu's *Spelunky*, a freeware platform game that takes almost everything a maladjusted 11-year-old loved about those games (and games like them), remixes that with the frothy cloud of two decades of game-design convention, twists it all around a spindle of inspired insight and serves it up as some kind of {bullshit prefix overload alert} neo-avant-retro cotton candy.

Presented in the popular (almost mandatory) pixelly graphics style reminiscent of the classic *Commander Keen/Duke Nukem* vein of shareware games, *Spelunky*'s mechanical fundamentals are on the surface pure platform: exploring subterranean levels, climbing ladders, dodging critters and leaping chasms in search of gems, gold bricks and jeopard-

ized sweethearts. Chuck some rocks, bomb some walls, lash out with your dinky little whip ... that sort of thing. But after a few minutes of play, as *Spelunky*'s roguelike elements make themselves felt, you'll realize you're into something much deeper than your usual run 'n' jump knockoff.

**THE KEY ROGUELIKE** feature is the "procedurally generated" levels—every time you play, you're getting a brand-new experience prepared right at your table. As with *Rogue* and its cousins, sometimes you'll get lucky—a cakewalk cavern loaded with easy-pickin' loot and pushover challenges—and sometimes you'll get mauled by a giant death-spider before you can say "run run run runrun-RUNgoddamniti!" By itself, this might just be a cool feature that keeps replays interesting, but Yu's gone further into what makes the roguelikes so addictive by investing *Spelunky* with their feeling of mystery and exploration, the sense of not only being in a new level every time you play, but of being in a whole new world that needs figuring out.

*Spelunky* begins with a tutorial that teaches you how to move and jump, how to pick stuff up, and how to use your character's handy bombs and ropes. Beyond that you're on your own; only by playing and dying and playing and dying and playing again will you figure out what items do what, how various weapons and tools behave, how traps work ... everything. All of *Spelunky*'s rules and mechanisms—all of which work perfectly, many of which are hilarious—are revealed through experiment, and the experimenting itself is pure gaming joy.

It may seem weird to talk about "spoilers" in the context of a game with no plot or story, whose levels are unique to each playthrough, but ... SPOILER ALERT! I want to talk about specific examples, here, but I don't want to ruin it for you; if you haven't yet, go download *Spelunky* (derek.yu.com; Windows only) and play it for a few hours while the rest of us talk about something else and wait for your return.

So ... did any of you see that crazy shit on *The National* last Friday, where they had the panel of savage entrepreneurial

bastards from *Dragon's Den* dishing out a hypothetical \$20 billion economic bailout package? I thought Buzz Hargrove was going to have a fucking aneurysm when Kevin O'Leary made his "take out the tubes and let Grandma die" speech.

Oh, you're back! So? Cool, huh? How long did it take you to figure out you could use the distressed damsels as throwing weapons and human shields? Did you try to rob a merchant ... or did he just come after you with his shotgun when you inadvertently wrecked his shop, by triggering a giant Indiana Jones boulder that destroyed half the level? How deep did you make it? After six hours and dozens of deaths I only made it three caverns in, myself.

A winter Saturday in the old computer room, Mom and Dad out running errands, and me alone rocking a masterpiece old-school enough to activate all nostalgia circuits, new-school enough to be totally captivating. Old feelings re-experienced rather than merely remembered; the only thing missing is the earthy smell of zit cream and a little Wham! on the turntable. ▽

# We been Buffaloed

HOCKEY

## IN THE BOX

DAVE YOUNG AND TB PLAYER  
inthebox@vceweekly.com

Here (with regrets) is your weekly Oiler update. Andrew Cogliano won the fastest skater competition at the All-Star Game (he was competing as he was invited to play in the YoungStars match) making him the Usain Bolt of the NHL. And the Oilers played host to the Buffalo Sabres for the first time in many years. The Sabres showed up and absolutely shellacked the Oilers 10-2. Yep. Let's move on, shall we?

## HEY NOW, YOU'RE AN ALL-STAR

Some random thoughts regarding All-Star weekend. Hardest shot or not, Chara is a freaking beast of a man. Sheldon Souray pots two!! Does anyone (players included) give a rat's ass anymore about the game itself? The skills competition is actually way more interesting. Cogs is fastest!! Kudos to Crosby for taking part in the festivities even though he was hurt. Nick Lidstrom and Pavel Datsyuk should show a little more respect for the league that has made them multimillionaires for playing a game. Gary Bettman is so adept at polit-speak, he can talk for 20 minutes and not actually say a thing. There's your All Star Extravaganza. Now that the All-Star break is over, can we get back to real, meaningful hockey again? Please? TB

## APOLOGY TO OILER FANS

My job is one that involves plenty of travel across the province. On December 12, I was in Calgary overnight for work. On December 16 the Chicago Blackhawks beat the Oilers 9-2. On January 27, I was in Calgary for an overnighter. As the top of the column tells us, the Oilers were plastered 10-2 by Buffalo on Jan. 27. And, just to add to the jinx, I was in Calgary on January 6 and the Oilers played San Jose at the time. The (argh) Flames smoked the Oilers 5-2. My work trips to Cowland

seem to result in bad news for the Oilers and even good news for the Flames. If you are superstitious, please accept my apology. If skeptical, I return to the City of Cows on March 17 and St Louis visits Edmonton. We'll see what happens then (aside from my annual date with Guinness). DY

## OPEN LETTER TO MY BOSS

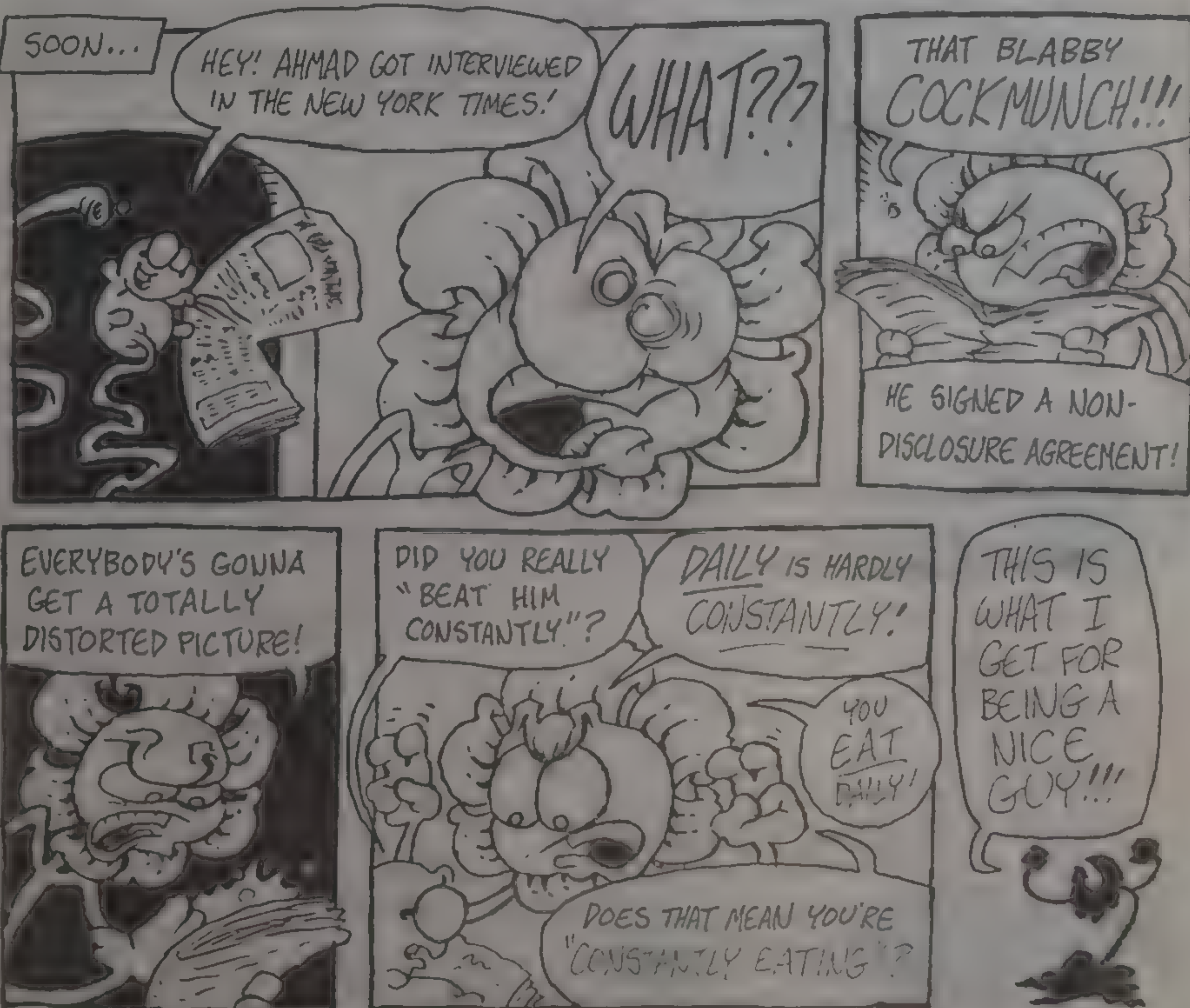
Dear Boss: While I am aware that travel is necessary for my job, I have some serious concerns about the behaviour of our Oilers while I am in Calgary. As you read above, my business trips to the Calgary seem to coincide with some historically wretched Oiler games. If this continues, we will need to take a serious look at no longer scheduling road trips down south on Oiler game nights. I know you understand. DY

## FLOWER POWER

It was an impressive sight, all those old-timey Habs greats at the All-star game. And, if you caught it, CBC's "100 Years, 100 Stars" was a decent watch as well. Strombo did a good job of hosting it, although he is one shitty skater. One shitty segue later and here we are at my point. This year, my wife got me the best Christmas present ever: an autographed Guy Lafleur jersey. Before Edmonton had an NHL team, there was Guy. He was the flashiest, scoringest, wind-in-the-hairest, late-night-partyingest, shitty-disco-album-makingest player in the NHL. Sure, he had some character flaws. But he broke records as well as curfews and was more colourful than pretty much anyone in the game today. I was always Lafleur when we played street hockey, and I still insist on wearing number 10 to this day. I just don't smoke on the bench. TB

## THIS WEEK'S OILER DEFINITION

"Buffalo" 1) A city in New York, known for popularizing chicken wings. 2) Another name used (inaccurately) to describe the American Bison (Latin name Bison Bison). 3) After beating the Oilers 10-2, Edmonton's newest least favourite hockey team. This wouldn't have happened if Vinny Lecavalier was an Oiler, would it? ▽





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The little box that you are looking at right now is what we, in the industry, call a "fill". Usually there is a cool looking picture or a logo here that simply takes up the errant space left after a story runs short, or an advertiser forgets to send us an ad, or something like that. In this case, however, we thought this would be a good space to let you know a little bit about the way news papers fill the extra space that is left over when the content doesn't quite fit the way we want it to. From now on, when you read a news paper, and you see small ads that seem to be sort of pointless, or merely advertise the paper that you are already reading, you will know that this is an industry standard practice, and you can tell all your friends that you learned about it in Snow Zone, in Vue Weekly

**SNOW ZONE**  
- VUEWEEKLY

# SNOW ZONE

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Matt D'Amico

## Back in black

### A look at Marmot's darker side

HART GOLBECK / [hart@vueweekly.com](mailto:hart@vueweekly.com)

When it comes to family ski vacations, everyone knows that Marmot Basin is the "Big Friendly." But what about your wild and daring soul? Are there enough significant black diamond challenges inside the boundaries of these slopes? Is there enough extreme terrain? I'm not an extreme skier but I can hold my own on most runs, so last weekend I put Marmot to the test.

After a few pointers and some coaching from Brian Rode (VP, marketing) I set off in search of hidden gems for the advanced skier. Rode's main advice was that I shouldn't go alone, but there was no one around to send with me so a pat on the back and a "don't be afraid, you can do it," were all I was going to get.

I did have my son and his friend along, two enthusiastic snowboarders who are willing to try anything especially if there is a remote chance for some big air. But they were already up enjoying some of the fantastic powder that morning and I would catch up to them later.

After a quick warm-up on Dromedary I head for Easter Alley, a well known track on Eagles East. Since this part of the mountain only opened recently, I'm expecting a sweet ride. Easter Alley is easy to spot from the deck of the Caribou

## JASPER IN JANUARY

Lounge but once you get up there via the Eagle Ridge quad, it's a little unclear. I meet a couple other skiers in search of the same and after a long traverse nearly to the end of the ridge, I spot the line and we drop in.

The run is a big sweeping C-shaped chute, very steep at first, but it settles into a nice slope halfway down. Staying in the centre proves best because this is where all the snow has accumulated. It's boot top powder all the way down. Only one wipe out into the soft stuff and I'm feeling pretty good as I make my way through Hour Glass and Rock Garden, and finally down to the base on Slash.

INSTEAD OF THE Eagle Express quad, I ride up the old Tranquilizer chair. This is the last season for this chair because over the summer it will be replaced by the new bottom-to-top quad. It's a good time to scout out next year's new Tranquilizer run. With the lift towers removed this will be the steepest terrain you'll find on the lower mountain.

I meet up with the boys and we head for another underused area. Over to the far right of the Paradise triple chair, Keifer's Dream doesn't get

much traffic and Rode hinted it would be in great shape. He was right: the snow is deep, and the pitch is just right. We blaze through it all continuing down onto No Show all the way to the Caribou chair. This time we head back up and over to the Knob chair Charlie's Bowl, another one of my favourite runs is still closed but the Dupres Chutes and Knob Hill are in great shape. It begins to get a little windy and traffic on the upper chutes is awfully light so we take full advantage and continue to cruise while the getting is good. It's going to be amazing in a few years when there'll be a chair to ride from the Paradise Chalet to the top of Marmot Peak, another improvement that's in their long range plans. I can't wait. But for now I'll have to be happy with the new high-speed quad from the base to the top of Paradise.

At the end of the day, my aching knees and thighs testify that, yes, there are some amazing black diamond runs at Marmot Basin. Easter Alley and Kiefer's Dream are the best in my opinion, but there is more to discover, adding up to a reasonable 40 per cent of the hill's total runs (between "advanced" and "expert" ratings). If you need some advice, ask a pro patroller, they know the most about conditions and great terrain. ▽





# Tracking the 'Wildcat'

COLIN WISEMAN / colinw@vancouverweekly.com

**'H**ow about we just do a hot lap?" Rachael asks. She's standing next to an idling snowcat in the tenure of **Baldface Lodge**, just across the lake from Nelson, BC, and stepping into her bindings while light snow falls from grey skies. We've just finished filming a 1000-metre line through a burned out, gully strewn forest in some of the deepest, lightest snow I've ever ridden—deep enough that filming for *The Ride Guide* was becoming secondary to pow turns. Besides, we have already spent the bulk of three days getting shots in the steep, perfectly spaced trees of the

## RIDE BALDFACE LODGE

South Kootenays and are ready for some top-to-bottom speed laps.

"Sounds good to me," replies Mike, the camera guy, tossing his 60-pound gear bag—lovingly referred to as "mini-me"—back into the cat and grabbing his poles. He's been making turns with the bag on all week and can't wait to rip a line unencumbered.

Dropping behind lead guide Joel McBurney, a red-headed joke machine and accomplished back-country skier himself, we let loose down a few thousand feet of vertical on the pillow-rich gully called Cheeky Monkey, emerging from face shots for the occasional glimpse of one of the crew being engulfed in their own overhead sprays of Selkirk blower

It's finally clear to me why they call it "champagne powder"—when you pop the cherry of a mid-winter Kootenay pillow, it shoots straight up into the air, much like a bottle of bubbly. This is the Moët of champagne powder ... like the rest of the experience at Baldface, it is

only of the highest quality.

I arrived at Baldface five days prior via A-Star with Jeff Galbraith, publisher of *frequency: The Snowboarder's Journal* and *The Ski Journal*, and a promise that Baldface was firing. The flight in only lasted five minutes but took us to a different world. Rising from the smoked out hippie hamlet on the lake, we crested a ridge and pointed it straight up an alpine drainage to the lodge: a handful of chalets arranged around a central, timber framed lodge, where a crew waited to load the chopper and head home

Disembarking in a cloud of rotor wash, two of the departing guests scrambled to retrieve their gear from the "out" pile; Ben and Dave, a couple of Utah snowboarders, just couldn't leave—it was too good.

**I FIRST MET RACHAEL BURKS** and the rest of the *Ride Guide* crew around the dinner table. We had been there three days already, riding ever-deepening snow in a cat full of industry professionals. It was a treat to exchange snowboards with Canadian Olympian and part-time Baldface guide Mark Fawcett, but Rachael would up the ante—or at least the energy level—considerably. She had brought an eight-pack of Wildcat, proving that Utah folk know how to handle their booze—even BC's favourite malt liquor. She enthusiastically chugged away on a can of Wildcat over a three-course gourmet dinner while the guests indulged in \$100 bottles of wine. Rack of lamb and malt liquor? Bon appétit!

The other skier in the crew is Peter Velisek. A small, wry-framed Kootenay native, he is pretty quiet and unassuming in the lodge, but lets loose on the hill, blasting pillows in full-on charge mode—hands in front, low, compact and in a constant search for pillows and rocks to launch. A former Canadian Freeskiing Champion, he now judges competitions but continues to ski for a couple sponsors like Dynastar and Peak Performance. Later that night when one of the wealthier guests opened the bar for free drinks and an icicle shot-luge appeared around the bar alongside a bottle of Jagermeister,

offering instantly chilled jager shooters, Pete drifted off to bed to get ready to send it in the morning

Rounding out the crew are snowboarders Tyson Carmody, another local resident and accomplished freerider, and *frequency's* senior editors, myself and John Laing. Filming it all is Mike Benedek, fresh off a heli trip to Northern BC and bound for China after Baldface, three bags of camera gear in tow. Good thing he's kind of a strong dude because hauling all that gear around, let alone skiing with it, would be near impossible for a person of lesser stature

**THE MORNING BROKE CLEAR.** Low fog draped over the valley below while the tenure of Baldface sat still and pristine under glittering, airborne particles of snow that were too light to stay planted on the ground. The morning ritual, now four days deep, proceeded: eggs over easy, a tall mug of fresh coffee, and a conversation with Aussie bartender Rebecca who was also shaking off the night before. Stragglers poured into the lodge sporting long underwear and bed head. Anticipation grew with the rising sun—its first appearance since our arrival.

Groups split up as transceivers were switched on and checked and the three jam-packed snow cats rolled out to different peaks on the top of the range. The fog was rising and the sun wouldn't last long

When Mike hopped out to film our first line of the day, I was stuck with a dilemma: disembark to shoot photos, or leave the camera in the cat and ride the line myself. He wanted to shoot riders and skiers descending in pairs and without me there were only five riders—enough to justify the shift from behind the lens to in front of the camera

My role was simple: chase Peter through the trees and try to keep up. We had first tracks and the light was firing. So was the snow. Peter pushed off, dropping silently while Mike rolled film across the valley. Mellow pow turns gave way to tightly bunched trees. Peter turned left then cut right, popping off a ledge and dis-

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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## CONDITIONS REPORT

### Local

Rabbit Hill — 60cm base, no new snow. All lifts and runs open.  
 Snow Valley — 60cm base, no new snow. All lifts and runs now open.  
 Sun Ridge — 60cm base, no new snow. All lifts and runs open.  
 Edmonton Ski Club — Open.

### Alberta

Canada Olympic Park — 70cm base, 6 lifts and 5 runs open.  
 Castle Mountain — 61-147cm base, 30cm of new snow, 6 lifts and 50 runs open.  
 Lake Louise — 151-172cm base, no new snow, 9 lifts and 126 runs open.  
 Marmot Basin — 76cm base, 5cm of new snow, 6 lifts and 75 runs open.  
 Mt. Norquay — 85cm base, no new snow. All lifts and 26 runs open.  
 Nakiska — 16-63cm base, no new snow, 5 lifts and all runs open.  
 Sunshine Village — 128cm base, 3cm of new snow, 12 lifts and 100 runs open.  
 Tawatinaw — 46cm base, 4 lifts and 23 runs open.

### B.C.

Apex — 159cm base, 6cm of new snow, 3 lifts and 58 runs open.  
 Big White — 149cm base, no new snow, 15 lifts and 110 runs open.  
 Fernie — 152-160cm base, no new snow. All lifts and 106 runs open.  
 Kicking Horse — 125cm base, 6cm of new snow.  
 Kimberley — 76cm base, no new snow, 5 lifts and 68 runs open.  
 Mt. Washington — 87cm base, no new snow, 3 lifts and 45 runs open.  
 Panorama — 48-83cm base, 5cm of new snow, All lifts and 119 runs open.  
 Powder King — 162-293cm base, 36cm of new snow.  
 Red Mountain — 133cm base, 6cm of new snow. All lifts and runs open.  
 Revelstoke — 30-71cm base, no new snow, 5 lifts and 52 runs open.  
 Silver Star — 119-150cm base, 6cm of new snow, 11 lifts and all runs open.  
 Sun Peaks — 95-132cm base, no new snow, 10 lifts and 121 runs open.  
 Whistler/Blackcomb — 127cm base, no new snow.  
 White Water — 162cm base, 20cm of new snow.

### U.S.A.

49 North — 254-287cm base, no new snow, 5 lifts and 70 runs open.  
 Big Sky — 119-177cm base, 30cm of new snow. All lifts and runs open.  
 Crystal Mountain — 172cm base, 7 lifts and 45 runs open.  
 Great Divide — 76cm base, 7 lifts and 80 runs open.  
 Lookout Pass — 157-221cm base, 28cm of new snow. All lifts and runs open.  
 Mt. Spokane — 102-165cm base, 15cm of new snow. All lifts and runs open.  
 Schweitzer Mt. — 129-185cm, 8 lifts and 92 runs open.  
 Silver Mt. Resort — 81-170cm base, 5 lifts and 67 runs open.  
 Sun Valley — 89-132cm base, 13 lifts and 88 runs open.

All conditions accurate as of Jan 29, 2009.

Get up to date conditions, easy to search @ [vnewweekly.com](http://vnewweekly.com)

Every Resort

## BALDFACE LODGE

COVERED BY A PLETHORA OF CHAINSAW

appearing. I had to make a split-second decision: pull up and spot a landing or follow blindly? Remembering Joel's promise that it opens up again after the so-called "green wall," I pointed it through the trees, floating close to the 20-foot lip and stomping down a tree top, pumping rollers out the bottom of the line. Peter laughed, "Decided to follow me, eh?"

His bomb hole was 10-feet below mine, well clear of any trees. "Maybe I just need to ride faster," I replied as we watched two more pairs bag their own lines. Mike skied down, tripod cradled in his arms like an oversized machine gun. He smiled, "That worked out well."

The fog was almost upon us as we sped back to the cat through powder-caked gullies and into a stump-strewn clearcut that served as a kicker train to the idling snowcat. The morning had just started and there was still exploring to do.

SOMETIMES THE CAT rides took 10 minutes—this one was closer to an hour. It meant we were getting into the far reaches of the range, breaking trail through three feet of fresh snow on obscured cat roads. The cameras were officially shelved for the remainder of the afternoon, and it was time to go exploring.

We finally came to a rest on an upper ridge, the road ending at a cliffed-out knob. "This one might take some time," Joel told the cat driver. "We'll radio you when we get out." He turned to the group. "Stay a bit right through these first chutes, then we'll convene at the bottom of the powder field. We're gonna try something new."

One by one we descended into steep, tightly wound trees and picked short straight-lines into a gentle run-out. A riverbed ran to the right and we followed Joel's orange jacket into the gut of it, dropping pillows in thickening snow along the right side of the bank. A high traverse left us in a "selective" clearcut, a wide open expanse dotted with a few tall

hemlocks and a plethora of chainsaw borne booters. It didn't take much convincing to let loose on the stash, hopping from stack to stack towards the creek and a tiptoed river crossing—a small drop to straight-line over a suspect snow bridge—to a short grind straight up the rise on the other side.

Joel went first and radioed back to the cat for a pickup. He pointed to the left. "Looks like cougar tracks." The paw prints were big, around the size of my hand, and new snow overnight meant they were fresh. "Might even be a wildcat," Joel quipped. "Looks like he might have snaked our first descent."

"Really?" I asked.

"As far as I know, we were the first people to ever ski that line. I've never been here before," Joel replied. Rachael's laughter booms off the walls of the gulley. "A wildcat! I guess they like pillows too."

And so we christened "Wildcat," the newest run in Baldface's tenure—named as much for the mysterious four-legged creature that snaked our line as the rowdy skier girl from Utah with a love for malt liquor. ▽

## In a Snow Daze at Winter Light

SNOW ZONE

### FALL LINES

HART GOLBECK  
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Winter Light festivities are continuing in our city. For those of you still in the dark, Winter Light is a combination of new and old winter events that have been administratively combined into one big festival. This Friday is the big Snow Daze event at Snow Valley Ski Hill and nearby Whitemud Park.

At first thought, Friday appears to be an odd day for this event but considering it's a PD day for many students it seems to fit. Coincidentally the weather man appears to be on board as well. It all kicks off at 2 pm at the ski hill where if you register at [winterlight.ca](http://winterlight.ca)

the lift tickets, equipment rental and lessons are free for the day. Immediately following the fun day of skiing and boarding, at 5 pm there is a six kilometre "Fun Run for the Light." This run will follow the trails from Snow Valley to Whitemud Park. It will be starting to get dark

at this time and LED lights and handmade lanterns will guide the way.

Soon after this, the action packed evening continues with "The Baba Yaga Trail Adventure." Taking place along the same path as the fun run, there will be guided tours starting at 6 pm and every 30 minutes thereafter until 9 pm. Along with the adventure you'll find warming tents and tipis, hot chocolate, warming fires and sleigh rides.

If you end up at the ski hill at 8 pm you'll be just in time to watch a big air competition. Boarders and skiers alike will be launching to showcase their high flying talents. If you're planning to start your day at Whitemud Park, bring your toboggan. I'm sure I did not cover all of the activities planned for this day so you better surf to [winterlight.ca](http://winterlight.ca) for all the details. ▽

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# Odd couple makes good

Harmony between Parks, Marmot healthy for all



## JASPER IN JANUARY

viable resort within the park. They aren't all talk either. Since 2002 they've sunk \$8 million into lodge upgrades, snowmaking equipment, the Eagles East quad and the Magic Carpet lift.

This spring they'll be embarking on their biggest project yet: installing Western Canada's longest high-speed quad, going from the base of the resort to the peak of Caribou Ridge. Next winter you'll be taking a cool 1.5 minute ride that will not only get you to the top in a hurry, but will also reduce some of the congestion that can occur during peak times.

And there's more planned for the future. Like a chair to Marmot Peak and an expanded training area near the base. But that will have to wait a few years. In the meantime, all this talk and paperwork has provided a better understanding for both the Parks Canada and Marmot Basin groups. Gibson and Parks Canada's James Bartram both made similar comments to me about their approach: we agree on 90 per cent of the issues, let's work together on that and the other 10 per cent will follow.

IT'S EVEN LED to the formation of the Marmot Learning Centre, a joint venture between Parks, Marmot and the Grande Yellowhead School Division. Next time you're up at the Paradise Chalet, have a look through the second floor windows and you just might see a classroom full of eager students. The centre's purpose is to enhance

the education program Marmot provides to visiting schools and groups from across the region and around the globe. The teaching facility includes data projection, video conference capability and an avalanche transceiver training basin.

A key focus of this program is to expose students to current best practices in avalanche awareness, public safety and stewardship of protected lands. It is hoped that in the future this program will expand to include opportunities for career preparation and work experience. I'm wishing I was 15 again because I want to go. Last January I had an opportunity to participate in an avalanche training event with Joppo the avalanche dog. This four legged snowplough taught me a thing or two about awareness and persistence to succeed.

This isn't Marmot's only education venture. Three years ago they partnered with a British firm to form the Canadian Rockies Academy. The program started with 17 first-year participants, grew to 95 last year and currently has 170 men and women from around the globe receiving practical training to work at a professional level in all aspects of the ski industry.

At a cost of \$12 000 for an 11-week program, it's not cheap but nonetheless they've had no problem filling it to near capacity. In the past two seasons I've run into several students from Britain and Norway. You couldn't wipe the smile off their faces because they are here to learn, participate and party. Naturally the order of focus changes weekly.

Still, after learning about these programs, I get the sense that Marmot Basin and Parks Canada are setting a trend that many other mountain resorts will soon follow. And our youth will most certainly be the benefactors. ▽

HART GOLBECK / hart@vuwweekly.com

For years, the owners and operators of Marmot Basin and Parks Canada staff were at odds. Every time Marmot wanted facility and terrain improvements or additions, both sides would hunker down and set their battle lines. That was before.

Of late, both sides have been working together to find common ground. They've gone as far as calling it a partnership and Marmot Basin can now boast about being the first Rocky Mountain ski resort to sign off on a vision statement and site guidelines with Parks. From the Marmot Basin side, Dave Gibson has spearheaded efforts with the support of the new ownership group that took over in 2002.

The new owners are mostly hotel property owners within Jasper. They understand the need to be proactive and work this out together to provide a

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# Go down

## Good head technique is the foundation for switch, 360s

Where your head goes, so do you. It's a simple truism in skiing. Don't look at the trees, look at the spaces. If you want to ski backwards or crank 360s, start with your head.

The other day at Marmot I was skiing with local freestyler Steve Dowding and witnessed this principle in action. Coming down Whyte Ave above the Caribou chair he hits a kicker. With barely more than a foot of air he whips a full rotation and continues on at speed.

"Tuck your chin to your shoulder and your body will follow," he says. "When you want to stop rotating, just straighten your head."

In his free time, Dowding is practicing 900s and 1080s. Sounds easy, right? We'd

SNOW ZONE

## SKI TIPS

JERRY STRAIN  
snowzone@vancouverweekly.com

all like to hit the hero tricks but first we have to practise the basics. Start with the basic skill of skiing switch. It's all about the head.

When faced backwards down the slope, the natural tendency for most is to turn the head to the outside of the turn. It seems logical at first, aiming to see as much as possible downhill. I did it for years before somebody corrected me.

In fact, turning your head to the outside throws off your balance and increases your

blind spot. It shifts your weight beyond your vertical axis, leaning your body downhill instead of uphill into the turn. And while it may help you see a little further downhill, you won't be able to see the spot you're actually turning towards.

Test it out and see. Park yourself backwards on a gradual slope in a reverse snowplow, turned slightly to one side. Don't move. Just turn your head to the outside of your imagined turn and notice where your weight is, what you can see. A little off-balance? Then rotate your head to the inside of your turn and note the difference.

With your head turned inside, your weight is transferred back to the uphill side just as it would be if you were skiing forwards. The same principle applies in either position. Leaning into the hill will help you balance your turn and carve better. And since



der-width apart and your hands on your knees with your poles up so you don't get tangled. If you start to feel off balance or you're going too fast, brake by following the arc of your turn until you're horizontal to the slope. Or do a reverse snowplow.

Once you've built some confidence, try switching back to a forward position while in motion. It's all in the head. Remember Dowding's trick and tuck your chin into your shoulder in the direction you want to go. Just as you're facing forwards again, straighten your head. The rotation works.

Keep practising and eventually you'll be able to switch back and forth at speed, rotating on the fly. You can't become an aerial athlete overnight just based on this one technique, but it will help you build the requisite skill to eventually work up to 180s, 360s or 1080s. Just shows, sometimes you have to go backwards to move forward. ▽

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## d'Lish is, well ...

SHARON YEO / sharon@vnewweekly.com

It is unfortunate but true that the last thing most people want to do after the end of a long day is cook. Even though they may have the best intentions to eat healthy, many resort to fast food to ease their hunger pains. Amanda Babichuk, owner of Edmonton's newest meal assembly studio **d'Lish**, understands the pull of convenience firsthand. "I was creating a solution for me and my friends," Babichuk says. "Busy professionals who want to eat healthy."

D'Lish, located in the High Street area, offers a number of options that bridge convenience with health-conscious home cooking. D'Lish's meal assembly involves selecting a minimum of six meals from an online menu, booking a date with the studio, and rotating through stations with ingredients that have already been julienned, diced or otherwise pre-prepared. Each meal is then vacuum sealed for maximum freshness, to be placed in the patron's home freezer and reheated when needed.

"When people come in, they see how easy it is for them to pull something out of the freezer, put it in the oven and they actually have a nutritious meal. It frees up their time to do things they want to do, but they're not sacrificing that part of their lives," Babichuk explains. D'Lish can also pre-assemble meals for a fee, and has to-go entrees ready for a last-minute dinner alternative.

Babichuk recognizes some of the

PROFILE

**D'LISH**

DLISH.CA; 780.482.2242

initial misgivings people might have with the idea of meal assembly, but stresses the value for the dollar. "Two or three servings are on average \$21, so you're looking at \$7 a serving, and all of our portions are quite generous."

Though unrelated to her degree and eight years of experience in International Business Development, the idea of opening up her own meal assembly studio was planted when Babichuk, a single mother, visited Simply Supper last August. "In about an hour and a half I made enough food for my son and I for weeks. I thought, 'This is the best thing ever,'" Babichuk remembers.

AFTER RESEARCHING the concept and beginning to draft a business plan, she came to a realization. "If I'm really serious about opening this business," Babichuk recalls, "then that has to directly reflect the lifestyle that I want to lead and that I'm trying to achieve."

Her life had changed over the last few years—she had moved downtown and had "started shopping a lot more locally, paying attention diet-wise for my son and I, which meant eating a lot more organics."

Babichuk's focus on the local and eating healthier manifested themselves in the d'Lish ethos, as all pro-



duce and proteins used are sourced from area farmers as much as possible. "Listening to some of these farmers and how they talk about their animals, and the pride that they have in what they do makes the food taste better," Babichuk says. She is working on a "Wall of Greatness" to profile producers and partners.

D'Lish also uses food as a starting point to spread awareness. "We use the word 'organic' in our materials because it's a meaningful word to people," Babichuk explains, "but I use it to also pull [people] in, to educate [them] about 'clean food.'"

Moreover, d'Lish has joined E-Sage, Greater Edmonton Alliance and Keep Edmonton Original, and even participated in city council hearings on the annexation of land in the north east.

"We really want to get involved in stuff like that," Babichuk says. "We don't want to just be like, 'Yeah, buy local, buy organic, we're happy shiny people.' We actually want to walk the walk too."

Babichuk envisions that d'Lish will eventually promote more than just locally-produced food, and also showcase the work of city artists. "[We're] trying to bring some of that grassroots feeling back and that appreciation for the difference in products when there's love and attention spent on something," Babichuk expresses.

It's clear that with Babichuk's passion and support for local producers, d'Lish is not only providing meal solutions, but also a long-term vision for a more sustainable food system—convenience with a conscience. ▽

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# Tastes awful, just at first

LIQUOR?

## I HARDLY KNOW 'ER

HANNE LYNCH  
HARDLY@VUEWEEKLY.COM

It's the end of January. Do you know where your resolutions are? If you're like me, you made all kinds of excellent and healthy plans to start 2009; if you're really like me, you've already forgotten all those good intentions. If you're not jogging three times a week, saving half your income or eating nothing but rice cakes, don't despair. Forget the guilt and have a cocktail instead. If you want a bit of redemption, maybe you should pick up a bottle of Fernet Branca.

An old-old-old-school Italian liqueur, Fernet is well-known in Italy, beloved in San Francisco and Argentina, and languishes in obscurity throughout the rest of the world. Like so many of its obscure counterparts, Fernet's recipe is complicated and secret. What is known is that Fernet's maker is the largest purchaser of saffron in the world (they are said to purchase 75 per cent of the world's saffron). Other rumoured ingredients include wormwood, rhubarb, aloe and myrrh.

A sip of the syrupy, dark-brown liqueur will confirm why it's obscure. In fact, your

### FERNET CON COCA

For a drink that is both delicious and healthy, mix Fernet Branca with Coca-Cola. This is a classic combination that has been enjoyed for decades. The Fernet Branca liqueur is made from a blend of herbs and spices, giving it a unique and complex flavor. When mixed with Coca-Cola, the result is a refreshing and slightly bitter drink that is perfect for any occasion.

### Dark Fernet Branca

Ingredients:

Fill a glass with ice and pour the Fernet over the ice. Add Coca-Cola. Stir well and enjoy. This is a classic combination that has been enjoyed for decades.

### HANKY PANKY

For a drink that is both delicious and healthy, mix Fernet Branca with gin and vermouth. This is a classic combination that has been enjoyed for decades. The Fernet Branca liqueur is made from a blend of herbs and spices, giving it a unique and complex flavor. When mixed with gin and vermouth, the result is a refreshing and slightly bitter drink that is perfect for any occasion.

### Ingredients:

1/2 oz Fernet Branca  
1/2 oz gin  
1/2 oz sweet vermouth

For a drink that is both delicious and healthy, mix Fernet Branca with gin and vermouth. This is a classic combination that has been enjoyed for decades. The Fernet Branca liqueur is made from a blend of herbs and spices, giving it a unique and complex flavor. When mixed with gin and vermouth, the result is a refreshing and slightly bitter drink that is perfect for any occasion.

For a drink that is both delicious and healthy, mix Fernet Branca with gin and vermouth. This is a classic combination that has been enjoyed for decades. The Fernet Branca liqueur is made from a blend of herbs and spices, giving it a unique and complex flavor. When mixed with gin and vermouth, the result is a refreshing and slightly bitter drink that is perfect for any occasion.



first taste will make you wonder why anyone would voluntarily consume this. It smells a bit like a forest—piney, muddy, planty—and it tastes like mentholated, bitter, um, medicine. Fernet drinkers swear by the liqueur as an appetite-enhancer, digestion aid, hang-over cure and health-fixer. Sounds like medicine, tastes like medicine. You're going to hate it, I promise.

The funny thing about Fernet, though, is that the hate doesn't last long. Choke your way through your first drink of it, and you'll find that its bitterness is addictive. You'll soon start craving it like other devotees in the world do. Argentinians mix it with cola, drink it to fuel all-

night club-hopping, then use it to recover the next morning. San Franciscans prefer it straight, chasing it with a shot of ginger ale.

I usually recommend that people try liquor straight before they start mixing it into cocktails so that they can get a good feel for its flavour and understand how it's going to work in a drink. I don't think you need to do this with Fernet. Here you should ease your way in. Make a "Fernet con Coca" with a gentle amount of Fernet, easing the proportion higher when you start getting used to the taste. Another alternative is to use Fernet the way you'd use bitters, just a dash or two at a time to ease sweetness and add interest to a cocktail. To use it this way, try the "Hanky Panky," a mix of gin, sweet vermouth and just a dash of Fernet.

It's the end of January. You've made it through New Year's, through another month of winter, and through 1/12 of 2009. To me this is enough reason to make a cocktail. If you need another reason, Fernet is at least going to make your drink feel like you're doing something that's good for you. This is a resolution you will be able to keep. ▼

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FOOD NEWS!

## DISH WEEKLY

### LEARNING

Bringing together farmers, policy-makers, retailers and consumers to discuss food security issues, a conference entitled Food: Today, Tomorrow, Together will discuss ways to build a healthy local food system in Alberta.

Featuring Carol Off, host of CBC's *As It Happens*, as keynote speaker, the conference will focus on networking and action planning, as well as the environ-



mental effects of food production and the benefits of buying local. For more information, or to register, go to [foodalberta.org](http://foodalberta.org).

### NEW CHEF

Fourth street promenade wine and tapas bar TZiN has a new chef. In addition to

graduating with honours from the Dubrulle French Culinary School in Vancouver, Neil Chamberlain was the original executive chef at Whyte Avenue's Flavours Modern Bistro and was also the executive chef at the Northern Bear Golf Club. Anytime you'd like to welcome him, TZiN is at 10115 - 104 St. ▼



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# PLAYERS

## Some brewers like it doggy style

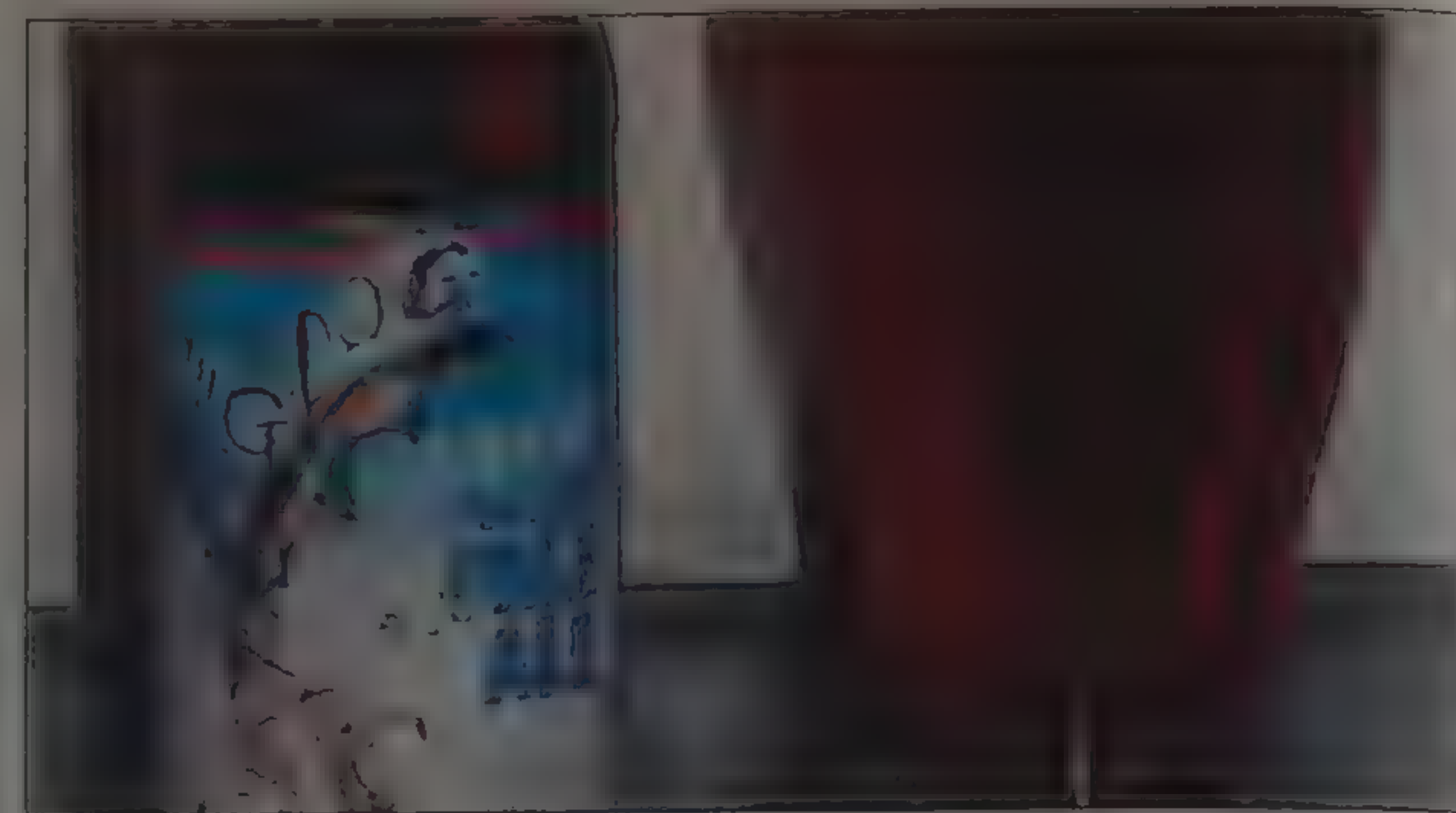
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**DOGGY STYLE CLASSIC PALE ALE**  
FLYING DOG BREWERY, FREDERICK,  
MARYLAND  
\$16.50 FOR SIX PACK

What happens when you mix uncompromising craft brewing with Gonzo journalism? The result might just be Flying Dog Brewery—quintessential American brewing with an edgy, irreverent ethos. Flying Dog may not be just a brewery. It may be a last reflection of an age in Americana—the extreme individualism and love of life represented by journalist and icon Hunter S. Thompson and rebel artist Ralph Steadman.

Flying Dog began as a standard brewpub in Denver, Colorado, operated by George Stranahan. A chance encounter by Stranahan with both Thompson and Steadman, however, launched his little operation into bigger and more extreme things. The two personalities convinced Stranahan to go big—and so he did. He closed the brewpub and opened a state-of-the-art brewery across the country in Maryland, and started brewing in a fashion consistent with Thompson's Gonzo approach to life.

His line of beers is at the centre of American craft brewing, offering hoppy ales and American interpretations of traditional styles such as hefeweizen, porter,



and Oktoberfest. A highlight of the brewery is that each bottle label was created by Ralph Steadman himself, so they exude the eccentric, fantastical, off-kilter world Steadman and Thompson celebrated.

**DOGGY STYLE CLASSIC** is Flying Dog's version of an American Pale Ale, the hoppy new world version of the traditional English Pale Ale. It is a slightly hazy orange-copper beer with a disappointingly thin head. The aroma is quite inviting, suggesting sharp pine and citrus hop quality (giving away the use of the distinct Cascade hop) and a sweet caramel impression. I also pick up a bit of bubblegum aroma.

The soft caramel and biscuit malt presents itself in the first sip. I only detect a small amount of hop flavour, surprising

given the aroma. There is a moderate bitterness at the back of the throat. It is a grapefruit bitterness, again reflecting the hop variety used. The finish is a bit too thick for the style, as well. American pale ales should finish crisp and hoppy.

While the beer is well-balanced, I find it lacks a standout quality. The hop is not as pronounced as many American Pale Ales, and the malt is subdued as well. I also detect a slight sourness to the beer, which gets my brain wondering if the beer might be a bit old and has developed some staling.

It is a pleasant enough beer, but to be frank there are better versions of pale ale available in town, including Alley Kat's Full Moon. I come away unconvinced that Thompson's Gonzo attitude has made it into Flying Dog's brew kettles. ▽

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# In search of a curator

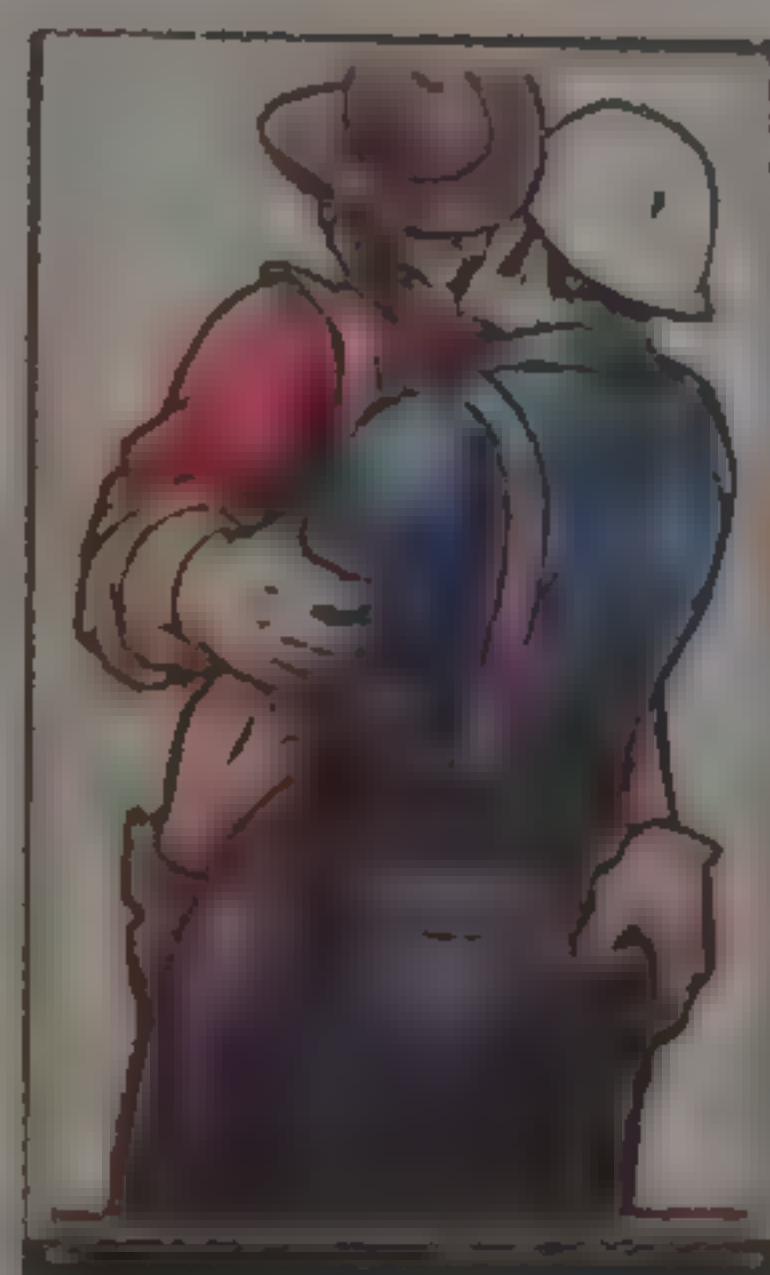
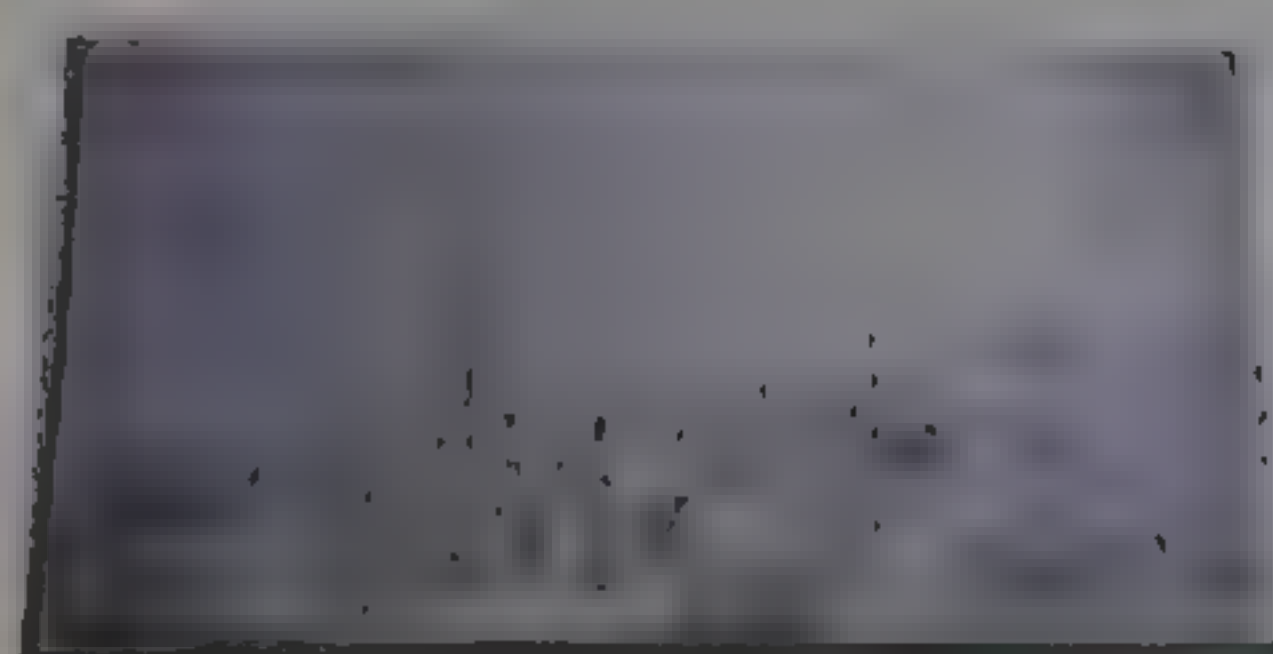
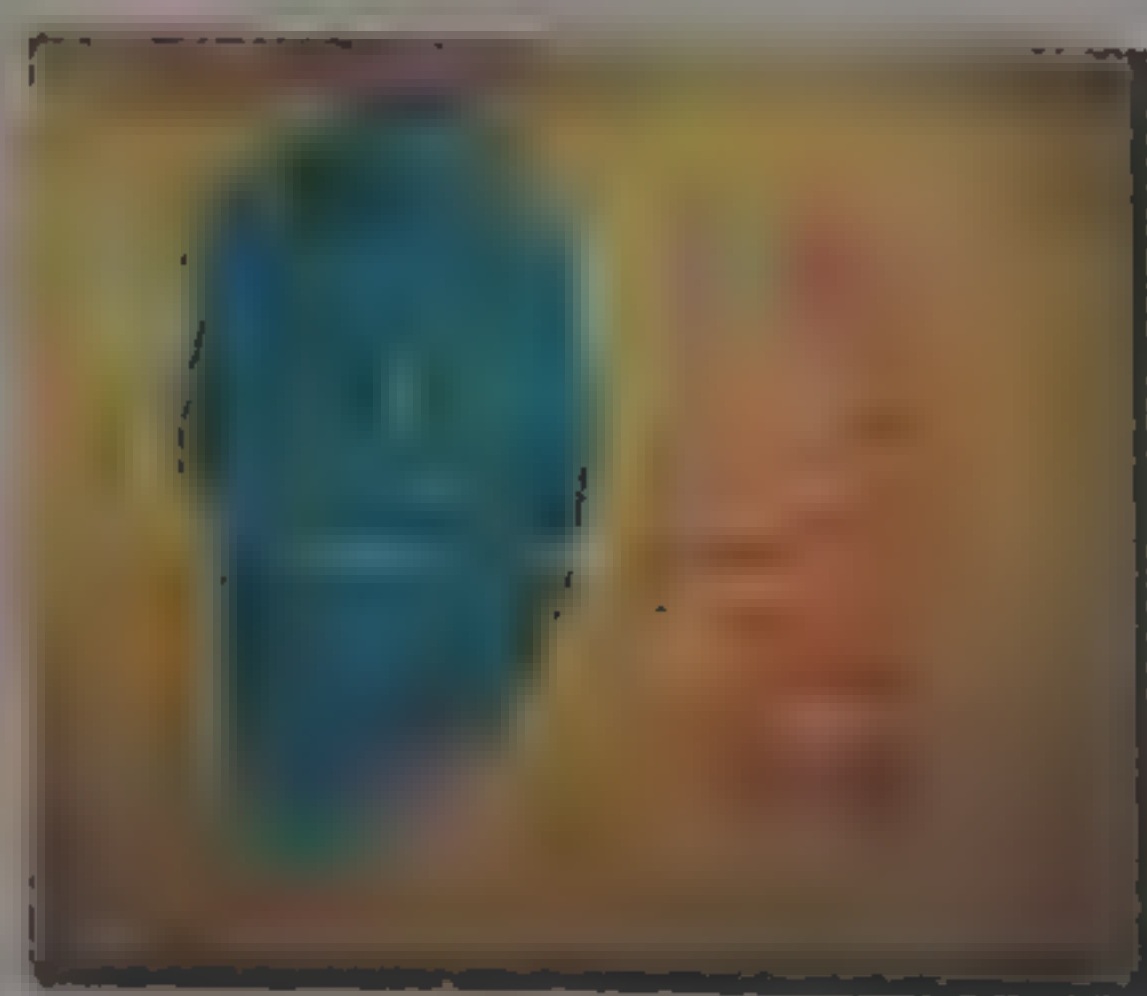
*Advantaged's* lack of focus fails its intent

ADAM WALDRON-BLAIN / adamwb@vueweekly.com

According to the curatorial text of *The Advantaged*, the works being displayed at The ARtery "will provide the viewer with insight into what it means to be a contemporary artist in urban Alberta right now." If this is the case, things seem to be bleak—but there is reason to hope, because the show does very little to address its topic, with little significant discussion of this idea or the others outlined in the statement. Despite the good ideas it's based on and the unassailable impulse to put it together, *The Advantaged* is crippled by a lack of curatorial rigor and defined by its loudest works as trite, gimmicky and lacking in depth. With most of the participating artists allotted only a single work, the pieces fail to engage one another and create collective meaning or value.

The show, with work by a large and allegedly diverse group of Calgary and Edmonton artists, is crying out in need of some strong editorial decisions. With the work of 22 artists up in the ARtery, the decisions behind the exhibition need to be questioned: while the best ideas are isolated, why are two of the least relevant artists given more space than anyone else? In particular, Ian Mulder has two large, flat and uninteresting canvasses made with a combination of spray-stencil and acrylic techniques, displayed at opposite ends of the room with nothing related near them. In the center is an untitled series of painted dresses by Suzanne Piechotta hanging from the ceiling columns. Perhaps she's attempting to recall maps with some of the painted patterns, but they lie awkwardly between painting and garment, too heavy and ugly to seem like clothing, and of questionable significance to *The Advantaged*, with a stronger resemblance to cake icing.

**THE MOST VISIBLE PIECES** in the show are for conceptual humor and spectacle, but end up seeming trite and empty, without depth or reward for close viewing. Beau Lark's "A Golden Man" exists to make one joke about a clichéd idea of Albertan self image,



VIZ ARTS

UNTIL SAT, FEB 12  
WED 4 PM - 8 PM; SAT 11 AM - 3 PM  
**THE ADVANTAGED**  
WORKS BY EMERGING ALBERTA ARTISTS  
CURATED BY AMELIA SCHULTZ-MCPHERSON,  
ANNA COE  
THE ARTERY (9535 JASPER AVE)

hardly justifying its ostentatious nature. The cheap-looking styrofoam construction and cartoonish image do not appear to be aimed at a specific purpose, but the lump of fake gold compares unfavourably with David Cerny's recent newsworthy depiction of Luxembourg in "Entropa," his satirical gift to the EU. Mark Gervais and Mark Hamilton's "Move Away, Travel Lots" is in the same category, this time without the help of scale, presented as unexciting take-away business cards printed with the titular phrases, and it also fails to justify its presence.

Things are not all bad, and it seems entirely possible that these works might even be rescued by an environment where they could resonate more with their surroundings, but their selection seems arbitrary. There are stronger works, but even they struggle with crises both internal

and external. Wendy Wan and Drew Ng-How-Tseung's "Nathan Fillion & Elisha Cuthbert" and Grant Hutchinson's "Trail" are more successful aesthetically, although underdeveloped and isolated, both being essentially one-note pieces similar to the joke works. The subtle images are trapped: there are humble and well-made drawings by Dara Huminski, Lisa Rezanoff and Smokey and mixed-media pieces by Tandie MacLeod and Genevieve Savard on display, and they are unjustly associated with worse work.

There is one way in which *The Advantaged* manages to create resonance between the works. Troublingly, it is in the cynical or sarcastic tone found in some of even the best work, like Huminski's drawings of pollution, Rezanoff's "Capitalism" and obviously in Smokey's "Dead (Frozen Bum)." One may wonder at its origin, since these artists and certainly the curators are happy enough to call Alberta home, but it is emphasized by the joking attitude taken by the unsuccessful works, and in the long run, perhaps its lack of seriousness is related to the curatorial strategy that birthed it. ▀



## You gotta have faith

*Grace's* stellar cast overcomes the difficulties of Craig Wright's script

PAUL BLINOV / blinov@vueweekly.com

They say God works in mysterious ways. In Craig Wright's *Grace*, the heavens split favour among characters with little regard for their religious devotion: we're given Steve (Frank Zotter), a born-again zealot, his believing but more subdued wife Sara (Myla Southward), the uncertain, troubled NASA scientist Sam (Nathan Cuckow) and a cheerfully agnostic exterminator, Karl (Jean-Pierre Fournier), and I'll be damned if they don't all get a sign of encouragement from above, at one point or another. *Grace's* characters get locked into a downward descent with how they interpret the signs. It's a compelling descent to watch, at times even darkly funny, though it makes a few leaps of faith that don't totally pay off.

The script starts with the ending: shown in reverse, line by line and action by action, the story we've yet to see reaches its tragic climax. It's quite a contrast from the beginning of the narrative that immediately follows, wherein Steve bounds into his new Florida condo with promising news: he's just received a promise of funding from a Swiss banker, and can start buying hotels that he can turn into gospel-based vacation palaces. "My expertise, the gift that I've been given, is faith," he says, attempting to cover his lack of business sense with zealous conviction and an ability to ignore the creeping, pit-of-the-stomach feeling that things aren't working out like he'd planned.

While he's out trying to seal deals, Sara's left to fend for herself against the loneliness of a new city. She befriends Sam, their bitter neighbour left scarred by a car accident and, until Sara's appearance, content to brood on his own despair.

**AS THEIR LIVES** become closer, their levels of faith start to shift. We watch them rise and fall in David Belke's

REVUE

UNTIL SUN, FEB 8 AT 7:30PM  
**GRACE**  
DIRECTED BY JOHN HUDSON  
WRITTEN BY CRAIG WRIGHT  
STARRING NATHAN CUCKOW, FRANK ZOTTER,  
JEAN-PIERRE FOURNIER, MYLA SOUTHWARD  
VARSCONA THEATRE (10329 83 AVE), \$17 - \$25

open set that has two apartments sharing the same playing space. John Hudson's quality direction plants some ingenious overlap in the shared living room(s). There's paralleled actions or, better, contrasting moods in the room, heightened by Chris Wynters's dreamy sound design.

Wright's script constantly mixes opposites, folding its lighter moments into its darkest. Scenes that start with laughter, like the first appearance of Karl, darken at their core with a line or two at the end. The blend keeps the plot from growing too dour even at its bleakest, although that mix occasionally serves to derail the building tension—particularly in the last third of the play, when the ending prophesized in the beginning starts to loom ever-closer.

The presentation helps cover up the flaws of the script, though. Zotter, in particular, is great: very controlled with impulsive little tics flaring up here and there through a grin-and-bare-it façade that serves his character so well. Southward plays Sara with subtlety, a good foil to her husband's tics, while Cuckow's turn from bitter to better is one of the show's finest moments and, for a relatively small amount of stage time, Jean-Pierre Fournier as Karl is a large stage presence, content in his disbelief, and cheerfully shrugging off Steve's religious queries. He needed a line-prompt at one point, but it hardly mattered. Even when the material they're presenting falters a little, the cast of *Grace* is worth putting your faith in. ▀



# Don't know Jack?

## Ballet Jazz de Montréal brings Barton's pair of Jacks to the stage

SHERRY DAWN KNETTLE / sherry@vancouverweekly.com

**W**hen you think of Jack, what comes to mind when you notice that the titles of the two pieces by Les Ballet Jazz de Montréal (BJM Danse) include the French and English versions of one name.

Ask choreographer Aszure Barton and she laughs cheerfully. "Let's go back to the making of *Les Chambres des Jacques*," she says.

She was choreographing a new work for BJM Danse a few years ago, and wanted to base it on the inner lives of the dancers. But to orchestrate all their different personalities into one piece, she needed to know

DANCE

FRI, JAN 30 (8 PM)  
**LES CHAMBRES DES JACQUES / JACK IN A BOX**  
PRESENTED BY LES BALLETS JAZZ DE MONTRÉAL  
AL BRYAN WEBB DANCE COMPANY  
JUBILEE AUDITORIUM (11455-87 AVE.)  
\$40 - \$50

about each person's nuances and idiosyncrasies. So she began working alone in the studio with each individual to create solos. "And I just started calling them all 'Jack'—each person," she says.

The piece was created in Montréal, where Barton fell in love with all

things French. She wanted to give the work a name that would pay homage to Québec culture. And she describes *Les Chambres* as bizarre, sinuous and mysterious—something she felt aptly reflected the Québécois. "And because a lot of the piece is set to music from Québec artists, I thought I would title the work in French."

The dramatic, atmospheric piece is lively and humorous, and the company toured it successfully around the continent.

**EVENTUALLY BARTON** returned to create a second piece for BJM Danse, and although she wanted to continue exploring the material from *Les Chambres*, she also wanted to focus on her own choreography.

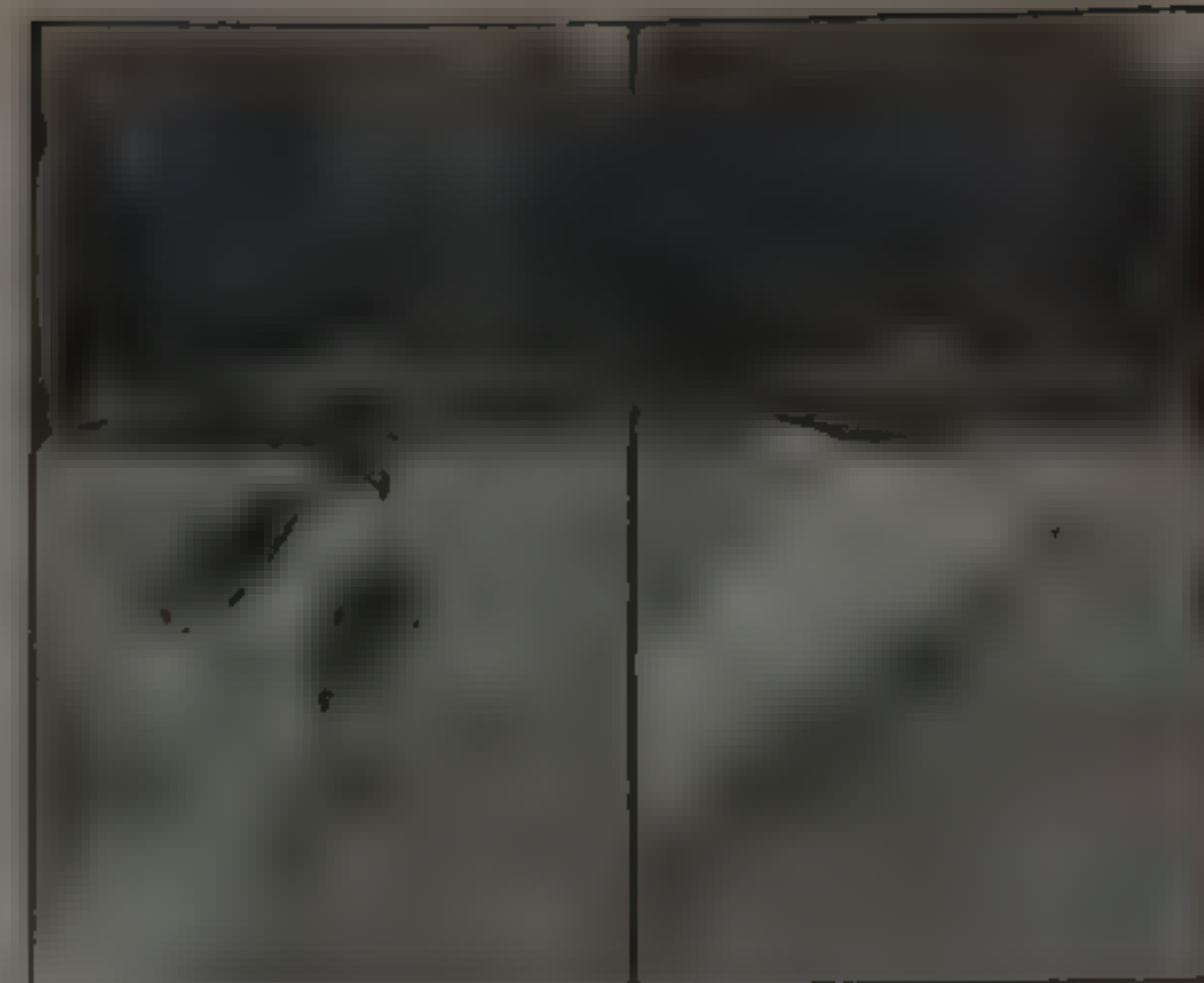
"It was less of the 'individual' and more of the group as a unit. I brought the movement to them, and developed a vocabulary based on the lines and the outer edges of the body."

Most of it was created at the Banff Centre in Alberta, the province Barton calls home. She titled her second piece *Jack in a Box*.

Barton offers an easy comparison for the two works. "One piece was created from the inside out. The other was created from the outside in."

She describes the new work as somewhat institutional. It focuses on the architecture and power of people working together as a unit, but she's put her own stamp on the piece, keeping things fresh and original.

"I was never one to stay within the lines," she says. "I've always been interested in what lived outside of the box." ▽



## Easy targets

### Pair of shows at Harcourt aim at political message, but come up flat

SARAH HAMILTON / hamilton@vancouverweekly.com

**V**isual art is one of the most sustained voices of dissent in our culture, so much so that it almost has an impetus to be a voice of protest. Harcourt House's current exhibitions address that urge to protest but at the expense of the work itself.

*Miracle Pennies* is a series of 12 photographs by Nate Larson. Larson received a letter from televangelist Peter Popoff soliciting for a donation in exchange for the enclosed "miracle pennies" which would grant Larson access into "the secret circle of God's supernatural blessing" and give Larson financial prosperity. He follows Popoff's instructions, dutifully performing the acts and sending Popoff a donation.

VIZ ARTS

UNTIL SAT, FEB 14  
**MIRACLE PENNIES**  
WORKS BY NATE LARSON

**STRENGTH, DUTY, HONOUR**  
WORKS BY SPYDER YARDLEY-JONES  
HARCOURT HOUSE (10215-112 ST)

Spyder Yardley-Jones' exhibition in the main space, *Strength, Duty, Honour* is a series of paintings, done in the style of 1940s propaganda. The subject matter ranges from the tarsands to the Israeli army to the Catholic Church and is accompanied by a series of sculptures, dioramas of ornate, balsa wood houses reminiscent of the Swiss Family Robinson. Both artists are making a political statement, Yardley-Jones more so than Larson. However, I think both artists can do better, because both artists are taking cheap shots at easy targets

**IT IS IMPERATIVE** for art to engage in politics. Through this lens we often realize how our actions have become estranged from our values. Art walks a fine line, however between being cutting edge and just being cutting.

Yardley-Jones covers everything from the tarsands to Ralph Klein with stops at Karla Homolka and Karl Toft in between (consider it a sort-of "Best of Canadian Pop Culture, 1990 - 2000"). Both Yardley-Jones and Larson take shots at organized religion, which is what I find contentious. Fundamentalism is a Ponzi scheme! The Catholics elected a Nazi as their infallible leader! So what? There is nothing new about this subject matter; they only smugly mock what has been mocked before without adding to the conversation.

I know better work is within the capacity of both artists because it's evident in these exhibitions. Larson's composition is luminous and articulate throughout, whereas the best work in *Strength, Duty, Honour* is the last painting you encounter. It says "Join the Israel Army. Where might is right your actions are protected for fear of anti-Semitism." An earnest blue-eyed boy in over-sized military attire waves an Israeli flag, the Star of David replaced with a swastika. With Gaza as a backdrop, I pause. Yardley Jones is right: we have become estranged from our values here. ▽



**SNOW DAZE AT SNOW VALLEY**  
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SNOW VALLEY SKI HILL/ WHITEMUD PARK NORTH  
119 St off Whitemud Fwy.

Share the Warmth - bring donations of warm mitts or toques, and we will distribute to community agencies

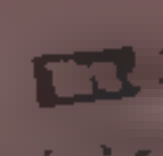
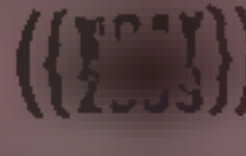
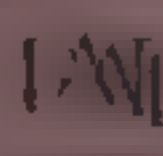
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# Get incredulous

## BOOKS | HOPSCOTCH

JOSEF BRAUN  
hopscotch@viveweekly.com

I think it was the father of an ex-girlfriend who first suggested to me that we're slipping into a new dark age. I was about as stupid as the average 20-year-old. He was a doctor, an articulate speaker, elegantly white-maned and terribly English. He took me to some excellent restaurants. At the time, I don't know that I really grasped what he was getting at, but I took his word for it. Years and much technological innovation and internet expansion later, the penny dropped: the proliferation and accessibility of information, and the ease with which that information is manufactured and delivered, seems to result not in a more well-informed public but rather threatens to cultivate the very opposite, a world of individuals who have to work a whole lot less to find out about a whole lot more—and that more is so overwhelmingly composed of dunderheaded trash as to boggle, or should we now say google, the mind.

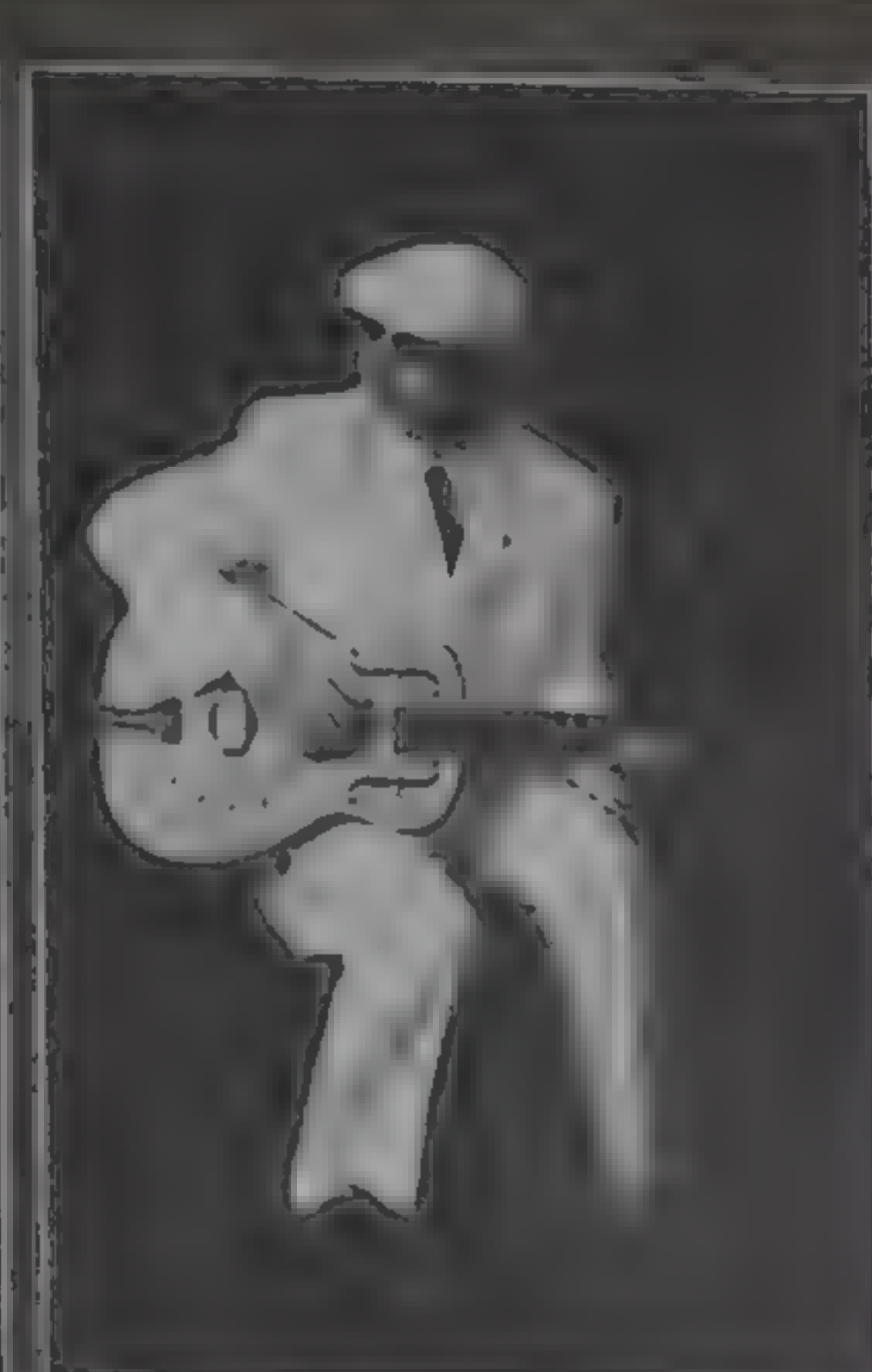
The words of the wise doctor—who might I also add drove one hot little antique sports car—came back to me as I tucked into *Counterknowledge* (Viking, \$28), the new book by Damian Thompson, who I remembered from an enormously engaging study of millennial cults he penned some years back called *The End of Time*. The subject of *Counterknowledge* is what Thompson deems the current "pandemic of credulous thinking" that threatens to undermine "the greatest legacies of the European Enlightenment," which is to say, rigorous scientific inquiry. The titular term is an invention of Thompson's, signifying anything passed off as fact that can be proven false by more carefully scrutinized facts: creationism, intelligent design, "young earth" science, the satanic ritual abuse scare of the 1980s and '90s, *The Da Vinci Code*, radical academia's rewriting of migration history, Scientology, the Chinese discovery of the Americas, anything purported by Rosie O'Donnell, the denial of the AIDS virus; the denial of the Holocaust, the notion that 9/11 was engineered by the US government (bizarrely, these last two theories seem to be frequently espoused by the same parties)—Thompson's examples are diverse and make for compelling, and inevitably funny, digressions.

The real issue here is not that such ideas are proposed but that, often in the interests of commodification, they are legitimized by the establishment, be it the publishers and booksellers that print up ostensibly fact-based pseudoscience and pseudohistory and market it as actual history and science, or be it venerated institutions that offer degrees of loose or nonexistent standards that mislead consumers into believing those degree-holders offering services are credentialized with great discretion. Curiously, this means that religion in itself is essentially off the hook, since the existence of God cannot be proved or disproved. I've been mulling that one over and I do think that the exception holds, but it's worth noting that one of the few breaks given to any institution based on non-science happens to be one Thompson represents—in his

other life, he's the editor-in-chief of the *Catholic Herald*. All kinds of religious theories are skewered here, but the mere belief in a deity is let be.

**WHICH LEADS ME** to a little bone I need to pick. Thompson is extremely knowledgeable with regards to the more dangerous interventions of religious or religiously informed groups at work in the fields of counterknowledge, and I don't even think we can begrudge him his special concerns about Christian fundamentalists who continually attempt to exorcise Darwinian theory from American schools, or Holocaust-denying Islamic scholars, as they do seem to carry a tremendous influence on the global community of Muslim youth. But there are other areas Thompson recklessly attacks without the same level of understanding at his disposal. In particular, Thompson throws everything that could be conceivably construed as alternative medicine into one giant pot and turns up the heat before sampling the ingredients. I'm absolutely sympathetic to his skepticism toward the hugely profitable industry built around what in some cases are, it would seem, placebos. But it seems unfair to lump the more dubious consumers of, I don't know, bio-feedback, or hypnosis, let's say, with someone who wants an extra boost of energy from ginseng, who wants to fight a cold with oil of oregano—and that shit works—or someone who just wants a good massage for crying out loud. What's more, Thompson's blanket dismissal of alternative medicine doesn't account for the flaws in orthodox medicine, which, last I checked, contradicts itself on what is and isn't good for you about as often as some people change their socks. But a double standard is at work here: "When a medical doctor makes a wrong assessment, that is either an honest mistake or a failure to follow diagnostic procedures." I find Thompson's faith in the medical community a little naïve to say the least, especially as it, too, has been thoroughly co-opted by capitalist interests.

Thompson's attacks become so fevered at times that he himself teeters on coming off as a crank, or a purveyor of counterknowledge. His final chapter kicks off thus: "Credulous thinking is spreading through society as fast and silently as a virus, and no one has a clue how long the epidemic will last." He likens this epidemic to AIDS. But, come to think of it, maybe he's got a point there. There were fatal, difficult-to-contain diseases before AIDS, and likewise there's always been heaps of bullshit out there being treated as fact. Which is no reason to ignore Thompson's warnings. While he at times oversteps his boundaries and let's what feels like a reactionary streak take control, Thompson's lively, perhaps too concise study of modern misinformation is of enormous value and I don't hesitate recommending it. He's latched onto a trend that urges further examination, and the groundwork he's laid in a number of fields has certainly enriched my own understanding of how this trend is playing itself out in new and alarming ways. Not that I've checked all of his facts, of course. I guess I just have to take his word for it. ▽



**Colin Linden with Whitey Johnson**  
February 5 • 7:30 pm



**Dave Gunning & Stephen Fearing**  
February 13 • 7:30 pm

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# Megatunes

Your Music Destination

## HERE'S OUR OFFICIAL TOP 30 FOR 2008!

1. Brett Dennen – Hope For The Hopeless (dualtone)
2. Kasey Chambers & Shane Nichols – Rattlin' Bones (sugar hill)
3. Jill Barber – Chances (outside)
4. A.C. Newman – Get Guilty (last gang)
5. Neil Young – Sugar Mountain: Live At Canterbury House (reprise)
6. Bon Iver – Blood Bank (jagjaguwar)
7. Southside Johnny – Grapefruit Moon (leroy records)
8. Antony & The Johnsons – The Crying Light (secretly canadian)
9. Beast – Beast (universal)
10. Bruce Springsteen – Working On A Dream (columbia)
11. Combichrist – Today We Are All Demons (metropolis)
12. Mark Olson & Gary Louris – Ready For The Flood (new west)
13. Geoff Berner – Klezmer Mongrels (jericho beach)
14. Cattle Decapitation – The Harvest Floor (metal blade)
15. Ryan Adams – Cardinology (lost highway)
16. Hank Williams 3 – Damn Right Rebel Proud (sidewalk)
17. Jenny Lewis – Acid Tongue (warner)
18. Joel Fafard – Three Hens Escape Oblivion (bayard island)
19. Gojira – The Way Of All Flesh (prosthetic)
20. Fucked Up – The Chemistry Of Common Life (matador)
21. Vivian Girls – S/T (in the red)
22. Steve Earle & The Del McCoury Band – The Mountain (new west)
23. Cedric Burnside & Lightnin' Malcolm – 2 Man Wrecking Crew (delta groo)
24. The Steeldrivers – S/T (rounder)
25. Elvin Bishop – The Blues Rolls On (delta groove)
26. The Duhks – Fast Paced World (sugar hill)
27. Hospital Bombers – Footnotes (saved by radio)
28. Charlie Louvin – Sings Murder Ballads & Disaster Songs (tompkins square)
29. Thom Yorke – The Eraser RMXS (xl)
30. EPMD – We Mean Business (eprecords)

## TEN SECOND EPIC HOMETOWN

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Edmonton band Ten Second Epic are back in the saddle following almost a year spent writing and recording the follow up to 2006's "Count Yourself In". "Hometown" is now complete, and scheduled for release on January 27th 2009. That means it's out now people.

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## ARTS WEEKLY

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### DANCE

**BRIAN WEBB-LES BALLET'S JAZZ DE MONTREAL** Jubilee Auditorium, 87 Ave, 114 St • *Les Chambres des Jaques and Jack in the Box* choreographed by Azure Barton • Jan 30, 8pm • \$50 (adult)/\$40 (student/senior) at TicketMaster

**SOLEDAD BARRIO AND NOCHE FLAMENCA** Enmax Hall, Winspear Centre, 780.428.1414 • Sun, Feb 8, 8pm • \$41-\$46 at Winspear box office

**SO YOU THINK YOU CAN DANCE** Rexall Place • Hip-Hop, Contemporary, Ballroom, Tango, Broadway, Salsa by the Top 10 finalists from the TV show • Feb 2 • Tickets at TicketMaster

### GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

**ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL** 10186-106 St, 780.488.6611 • *INTENSIONS*: Fibre artworks by Mary Sullivan Holdgrafer, Margie Davidson and Matt Gould; until Apr 18 • **Discovery Gallery**: Recipients of the 2008 Alberta Craft Awards; until Feb 28

**ALBERTA OIL PAINTER'S STUDIO** 7711-85 St, 780.465.6172 • Artworks by Susan Abma, Susan Box, Pat Eizinga, Margaret Klappstein, and others

**ALLEN GRAY CONTINUING CARE CENTRE** 5005-28 Ave, 780.756.5009 • *BACKYARDS AND OTHER NEIGHBOURHOOD TALES*: Artworks by Gillian Willans and Allen Gray residents

**ART BEAT GALLERY** 26 St, Anne Street, St. Albert, 780.459.3679 • Featuring artworks by Tinyan

**ART GALLERY OF ALBERTA** Enterprise Square, 100, 10230 Jasper Ave, 780.422.6223 • *SYLVAIN VOYER: SURVEY 1957-PRESENT*: until Mar 22 • *JOHN FREEMAN: THE HORIZON AS IT SHOULD BE*: Large digital photographs; until Mar 22 • *IMAGINING SCIENCE*: Until Feb 1 • Art for Lunch: *Sylvain Voyer-Edmonton, the World and back again* with Marcus Miller; free, Enterprise Square Atrium; Thu, Jan 29, 12:10-12:50pm • Tom Radford talks about Sylvain Voyer and the cultural currents that formed Edmonton's artistic milieu in the 1970s; Thu, Jan 29, 7-9pm; \$10/free (AGA member) • Free (member)/\$10 (adult)/\$7 (senior/student); \$5 (6-12yrs)/free (5yrs and under)/\$20 (family-2 adults, 4 children)

**CHRISTL BERGSTROM'S BED GALLERY** 82 Ave, 780.498.1984 • *CAR CULTURE*: Oil paintings on Edmonton's car culture by Christl Bergstrom. Portraits and paintings from recent years as commentary on modern urban life • Until April 30

**DOUGLAS' UNDER GALLERY** 1000-10010-100 St, ROSPECTIVE: Sylvain Voyer • Until Jan 31

**FRINGE GALLERY** 10516 Whyte Ave, basement of the Paint Spot, 780.432.0240 • *MANATEE MAMMARIES*: Artworks by Mandy Espezel and Travis McEwen • Through Jan • Closing reception: Jan 31, 2-4pm

**GALLERY AT MILNER** Stanley A. Milner Library Main Fl, Sir Winston Churchill Square, 780.496.7030 • *THE ESSENCE*: Nature photographs by Sirilak Carter; until Jan 30 • Kevin Law's photographs; Feb 2-27

**GALLERY IS** 4930 Ross St, Red Deer, 403.341.4641 • *IGNORANCE OF TRUTH*: Artworks, by Lauren Cowles; until Jan 31 • *STONE ICONS: REVISITED*: Paintings by Gallery IS owner Erika Schulz; Feb 2-28; opening reception: Fri, Feb 6, 6-8pm

**HARCOURT HOUSE** 3rd Fl, 10215-112 St, 780.426.4180 • **Main Gallery**: Artworks by Spyder Yardley-Jones; until Feb 14 • **Front Room**: Photographs by Nate Larson; until Feb 14

**JEFF ALLEN GALLERY** Strathcona Place Senior Centre, 10831 University Ave, 780.433.5807 • *TREES*: Paintings by the St Albert Painters Guild pARTners; until Jan 29 • *ACROSS THE RIVER*: Featuring artworks by Darlene Hoblak; Feb 3-26, opening reception: Feb 11, 6:30-8:30pm

**JOHNSON GALLERY** • Southside: 7711-85 St, 780.465.6171; Artworks by Dave Ripley, Julie Drew, Trish Haugen, Shirley Thomas, Ada Wong; wood-works by Don Bauer • Northside: 11817-80 St, 780.479.8424; Artworks by Audrey Pfannmuller, Don Sharpe and others • Through January

**KAMENA** 5718 Calgary Tr S, 780.944.9497 • Featuring artworks by various artists

**LATITUDE 53 GALLERY** 10248-106 St, 2nd Fl, 780.423.5353 • **Projex Room**: *CROOKED HEAD*: Paintings by Sean Montgomery; until Feb 14 • **Main Space**: *100 STORIES ABOUT MY GRANDMOTHER*: Artworks by Peter Kingstone; until Feb 4

**LOFT GALLERY** A. J. Ottewell Arts Centre, 590

Broadmoor Blvd, Sherwood Park, 780.998.3091 • *ABSTRACTS*: Works by the Art Society of Strathcona County • Until Feb 28

**McMULLEN GALLERY** U of A Hospital, 8440-112 St, 780.407.7152 • *COMMON CONTRAST*: Photographs • Until Mar 8

**MCPAG (Multicultural Centre Public Art Gallery)** 5411-51 St, Stony Plain, 780.963.2777 • *MIXED PALETTE*: Painting and drawings by Robert Bailey • Until Feb 25

**MICHIF CULTURAL AND MÉTIS RESOURCE INSTITUTE** 9 Mission Ave, St. Albert, 780.651.8176 • Aboriginal Veterans Display • Gift Shop • Finger weaving and sash display by Celine Loyer

**MUSÉE HÉRITAGE MUSEUM** 5 St. Anne Street, St. Albert, 780.459.1528 • *THE BISHOP WHO ATE HIS BOOTS*: Celebration of the life and legacy of Isaac and Sadie Stringer and their mission to the Arctic • Until Mar 15

**NINA HAGGERTY** Stollery Gallery 9704-111 Ave, 780.474.7611 • *BEST FRIENDS: DEPICTIONS OF DOGS*: Artworks by Father Douglas • Until Feb 1

**NEITH ROBERTSON GALLERY-WASH SPACE** 10183-112 St, 780.452.0286 • *Learn to Fly*: Nina Haggerty Silent art auction • Sun, Feb 1, 2-5pm; music by Sheri Somerville and Howard Fix

**PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY** 19 Perron St, St. Albert, 780.460.4310 • *DOUBLE TAKE*: Artworks by Jana Hargarten, Neil McClelland, Laura O'Connor, Beth Pederson, J. Scott Portingale • Feb 5-Mar 5 • Opening reception: Thu, Feb 5, 7-9pm

**PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF ALBERTA** Roper Rd, 780.427.1750 • Celebrating 100 Years of the UFA in Rural Communities Exhibit • Until Mar 29 • Free

**ROYAL ALBERTA MUSEUM** 12845-102 Ave, 780.453.9100 • *ARTE EN LA CHARRERIA*: Craftsmanship and design distinctive to the Mexican cowboy; until Apr 13 • *HEIGHTS OF FASHION*: History of the Elevated Foot; until Mar 8 • **Government House**: Tours on Sat, Sun, holidays, 11am-4:30pm, ph 780.427.2281

**SCOTT GALLERY** 10411-124 St, 780.488.3619 • *ROAD SERIES*: Artworks that explore the open space of western Canada. Featuring Robert Sinclair's paintings, Yunko Kitamura, lyrical sumi ink works, and prints and paintings by John Snow, paintings by Gerald Faulder, Jerzy Gawlak, Jim Stokes, Jim Visser and other gallery artists • Jan 31-Feb 17

**SNAP GALLERY** 10309-97 St, 780.423.1492 • **Main Gallery**: *MISSIONARY POSITION*: Printworks by Jocelyn Gardener; until Feb 21; closing reception: Thu, Feb 19, 7-9pm • **Studio Gallery**: *TRIAGE: AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO TREE SURGERY*: Printworks by Eric Steenbergen; until Feb 21; closing reception: Thu, Feb 19, 7-9pm

**SPRUCE GROVE ART GALLERY** 420 King St, Spruce Grove, 780.962.0664 • *IMAGE INFUSION*: Artworks by Margaret Klappstein, Lynda McAmmond, JoAnn Rasmussen, Anne McCormick, Sonja Mannoske • Until Feb 14 • Opening reception: Jan 31, 1-4pm

**STEPPE GALLERIES** 1253 adn 1259-91 St • **WEST GALLERY**: *WANDERINGS*: Photographs by Karen Robinson; until Feb 3 • **EAST GALLERY**: *CONTINUANCE*: Mixed media artworks by Jayme Chalmers; until Mar 17

**STUDIO GALLERY** 11 Perron Street, St. Albert, 780.460.5993 • *FOR THE LOVE OF ART*: Artworks by the Studio Gallery Associates • Feb 7-28 • Opening reception: Sat, Feb 7, 1-4pm

**TELUS WORLD OF SCIENCE** 11211-142 St, 780.452.9100 • *THE ART OF THE BRICK™*: until May 3

**VISUAL ARTS ALBERTA** 3rd Fl, 10215-112 St, 780.421.1731 • *MEMENTO*: Photographs by Candace Makowichuk and Felix Plawski • Until Feb 14

### LITERARY

**BLUE CHAIR CAFÉ** 9624-76 Ave, 780.469.8755 • Story Slam: every third Wed of the month

**CARROT CAFÉ** 9351-118 Ave, 780.471.1580 • Readings of poetry by Irish writers and a symposium on minimalist staging and theatre design led by Mark Henderson and April Farrow Part of the Serca Festival of Irish Theatre; Feb 2, 7:30pm • Symposium on adapting novels for the stage, led by Jennifer Spencer; Feb 3, 7:30pm

**CITY ARTS CENTRE** 10943-84 Ave, 780.932.4409 • T.A.L.E.S. Monthly Storytelling Circle: Tell stories or come to listen; first Thu each month • Until June, 8pm, \$3 (free first time)

**ROSIE'S** 10475-80 Ave • *TALES: EDMONTON STORYTELLING CAFÉ*: T.A.L.E.S.—The Alberta League Encouraging Storytelling open mic • First Thu each month, 7-9pm • Pay-What-You-Will (min \$6); info at 780.932.4409 • *TALES* Edmonton Storytelling Café • Hot Stuff: featuring Dawn Blue, Jennie Frost and Marie-Anne McLean; Feb 5

**UPPER CRUST CAFÉ** 10909-86 Ave, 780.422.8174

• *THE POETS' HAVEN*: Monday Night reading series presented by Stroll of Poets • Every Mon, 7pm • \$5 door • Feb 2 featuring spoken word artists Scarlett Eyben, Wendy Joy, Clint McElwaine, Kerry Mulholland, Taras Toroshenko

### THEATRE

**CHIMPROV** Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave, 780.433.3399 • Rapid Fire Theatre presents comedy every Sat (11pm) except for the last Sat of each month until June 13

**DIE-NASTY** Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave, 780.433.3399 • Live improvised soap opera set in a turbulent France on the cusp of the Revolution! Let them eat cake! Heads will roll! Directed by Dana Andersen • Every Mon (8pm)

**EDMONTON QUEEN: THE FINAL VOYAGE** Westbury Theatre, TransAlta Arts Barns, 10330-84 Ave, 780.409.1910 • Fringe Theatre Adventures, Guys In Disguise • Set in the sequin-addicted era of Edmonton's queer community, Darrin Hagen is reborn as Gloria Hole, with his drag mother, the iconic Lulu LaRude, by his side • Until Feb 1 • \$23.50 (adult)/\$19.50 (student/senior) at Fringe Theatre box office

**GRACE** Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave, 780.434.5564 • Shadow Theatre • Four neighbours are linked by proximity and their beliefs in this tour de force by playwright Craig Wright • Until Feb 8, Tue-Sat 7:30pm, Sat-Sun 2pm • \$20-\$25 (adult)/\$17-\$20 (student/senior); Sat mats Pay-What-You-Can; Tues Two-for-one at TIX on the Square

**GRIMMER THAN GRIMM** Catalyst Theatre, 8529 Gateway Blvd, 780.409.1910 • rabbitREpublic Theatre Company present the Grimm Brothers most unsanitized and unholy tales • Until Jan 31, 8pm; Feb 1, 2pm

**A LIFE IN THE DAY** Catalyst Theatre, 8529 Gateway Boulevard, 780.431.1750 • Presented by the Maggie Tree, co-produced by Urban Curvz Theatre, featuring Amber Borotsik, Michele Brown, and Mark Jenkins. The story of a day in the life of a small town on the brink of change and how lives interconnect • Feb 5-15, Tue-Sat 8pm; Sat-Sun 2pm • \$18 (adult)/\$15 (student, senior, equity) at Trans Alta Arts Barns Box Office, [www.fringetheatreadventures.ca](http://www.fringetheatreadventures.ca), 780.409.1910; Sat, Feb 14, 2pm Valentine's pay-what-you-can

**LOLEK: THE PLAY** St. Joseph's Basilica, O'Leary Hall, basement, 10044-113 St • Set in Nazi occupied Poland, a biographical drama about Karol Wojtyla's life before he became a priest • Feb 6-7 7:30pm • \$20 at TIX on the Square

**MAJOR BARBARA** Timms Centre for the Arts, U of A, 87 Ave, 112 St • Studio Theatre • Feb 4 (preview)-14, 7:30pm nightly (except Sun); matinee Feb 12, 12:30pm • \$10-\$22 at TIX on the Square

**OH SUSANNA!** Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave, 780.433.3399, [www.varsconatheatre.com/ohsussanna](http://www.varsconatheatre.com/ohsussanna) • The Euro-style Variety Spectacle, hosted by Susanna Patchouli and Eros, God of Love! Laughs! Music! Cocktails! • Sat, Jan 31, 11pm • Tickets at the door (10:30pm)

**PEACE, LOVE AND ROCK 'N' ROLL 2 AND THE BEAT GOES ON** Mayfield Dinner Theatre, 16615-109 Ave, 780.483.4051 • Written and compiled by Will Marks, a sequel to last year's hit • Until Feb 15 • Tickets at Mayfield box office

**PIRATES OF THE NORTH SASKATCHEWAN 2: HANGMAN'S CURSE** Jubilations Dinner Theatre, 8882-170 St, Phase III, WEM, 780.484.2424 • Until Feb 1; Wed-Sat, 6:30pm; Sun 5pm

**SCORCHED** Citadel's Rice Theatre, 9828-101A Ave • Written by Wajdi Mouawad • Until Feb 1 7:30pm; Matinees 1:30pm • Tickets at the Citadel box office

**THEATRESPORTS** Varscona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave, 780.448.0695 • Rapid Fire Theatre's weekly insane improv show • Every Fri (11pm) • Until July 2009 • \$10/\$8 (members) • Call to reserve

**THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE** (until Feb 1) Theatre, Grant MacEwan College, 10045-155 St • Musical about a small-town girl who arrives in New York City in search of a new life • Until Jan 31, 7:30pm • \$18 (adult door)/\$14 (adult adv)/\$12 (student/senior door)/\$9 (student/senior adv) at TIX on the Square

**THREE MO' TENORS** Citadel's Shocter Theatre, 9828-101A Ave, 780.425.1820 • By Marion J Caffey. A theatrically staged musical extravaganza • Until Feb 15 • Tickets at the Citadel box office

**THE YACONA MIMMOLBUES** (until Feb 1) Theatre, MacEwan Centre for the Arts, 10045-155 St, 780.497.4444, [www.macewan.ca/sa](http://www.macewan.ca/sa) • Benefit performance presented by the Students' Association of Grant • Fri, Feb 6, 6pm (door and art exhibition), 7pm (show) • \$10

**THE WILD GUYS** 100 Festival Way, Sherwood Park, 780.464.2852 • Comedy by Andrew Wreggitt and Rebecca Shaw, directed by Richard Winnick, Festival Players. A supermarket executive coaxes his three pals to get out of the city for some male bonding • Jan 29-31, 7:30pm • \$24 at the Festival Place box office



# Head of *The Class*

Laurent Cantet crafts a realist French masterpiece



JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vueweekly.com

The films of Laurent Cantet exude that rarest of things: a sincere interest in how people relate to their work. His films explore the role, meaning and residual effects of work, as well as the ways our institutions shape our sense of who we are as individuals. In *Human Resources*, Franck assumes a white-collar position at the factory where his father's been a welder for 23 years, his crossing over from one class to another ultimately symbolizing a betrayal of his roots. In *Time Out*, Vincent is laid off by a prestigious consulting firm and cannot confess to his family that he's unemployed, so he drives around France and Switzerland, naps a lot, reads the papers, and dabbles in crime. Work, or lack of it, defines these characters, however extraordinary their cases may be, in ways that ring alarmingly true.

Given this investment in the links between work and self, and given that both his parents were teachers, it's perhaps inevitable that Cantet would build a film around the institution that ostensibly does more to prepare us for work, nurture our social skills, and mould our identities more than any other. Cantet was already cooking up an idea for a film about a rebellious African student named Souleymane when he discovered *Entre les murs*, François Bégaudeau's acclaimed roman à clef about his experiences teaching French at a Parisian inner city school. Cantet abandoned his idea, or rather dissolved into a loose adaptation of Bégaudeau's book. "What I immediately liked about François is the fact that he is willing

that cinéma vérité often fails to yield. I, along with two other writers, spoke with Cantet via translator in a Toronto hotel, where he was asked about how he managed to capture such tremendous performances from his young, non-professional actors.

"By working with the students a long time, getting to know them, and respecting who they are, they came to trust me," Cantet explains. "But it was also through creating characters on the basis of what they themselves proposed. Take Wei. Originally in the script there was a Chinese character named Ming, and he was very shy. He wouldn't speak for fear of making mistakes. Then we met Wei Huang and he was essentially the opposite. He loves to talk, loves a good argument. There was no point in asking Wei to shut up and become something he's not. As it happens, Wei's a lot more interesting than Ming would have been."

Souleymane survived the project's evolution and, in contrast to the Ming character's adapting to fit more fluidly with Huang's outgoing persona, Franck Keita was asked to reverse his normally shy demeanour. Clothes, that crucial component of teenage identity, played an enormous role in Keita's ability to bring out a side of himself that could plausibly behave like a bully. And the tension between Keita's tendencies and those of the character make Souleymane compelling, and ultimately sympathetic. As Cantet puts it, "you can see that behind this tough look is a very vulnerable sort of fragility."

With slight exceptions, *The Class* unfolds entirely within the confines of the school—within the walls, as the French title states. Thus whatever we learn about these characters is gleaned through the rituals of school life. But what we learn composes not only portraits of individuals but some semblance of contemporary France's sometimes fraught multiculturalism.

"The idea was to show that the school was neither a sanctuary not a fortress," says Cantet. "Therefore, everything that happens in the country has an effect on the school. It does happen that people get deported as illegal aliens. It does happen that kids who

don't do well in school get sent to their home countries. Yet classes continue."

**RUNNING PARALLEL** to situations stemming from contemporary cultural phenomena are others that are at least as old as the pedagogical tradition. A key scene where the mischievously charming Boubacar "outs" Souleymane's curiosity about François' sexual preferences reveals how closely questions about sex cling to young minds attempting to bring order to their surroundings.

"The part about François' sexuality is actually in the book," says Cantet. "Teachers have told him they've often encountered similar questions in the classroom, because at that age boys are very interested by anything sexual. Homosexuality is something that intrigues them, but they tend to respond with homophobia. Many teachers refuse to deal with a question like Souleymane's, but François sees it as an opportunity to discuss, to widen horizons, to show them what's

problematic in their homophobia."

I asked Cantet about François' call for openness in his classroom, exemplified in the self-portraits he assigns. François' policies prove precarious, yet there remains a bold polemic in his story about the importance of balancing privacy with a willingness to publicly share feelings. It gets François into some trouble when he steps out of bounds, yet it also allows some students to transcend the dominant rule of repression that keeps many in their shells.

"One of the things that François has been reproached for is using too much intimacy," says Cantet. "But it's so much more interesting when you deal with students on the basis of what is real, what a person's real feelings are, where they stand, rather than glossing over things. François is an idealist. He tries to create a level playing field between himself and his class, and the system can work against him. Yet perhaps between these conflicting ideologies something valuable can emerge." ♥

FOREIGN

OPENS FRI, JAN 30  
**THE CLASS**  
DIRECTED BY LAURENT CANTET  
WRITTEN BY CANTET, FRANÇOIS BÉGAUDEAU,  
ROBIN CAMPILLO  
STARRING BÉGAUDEAU, FRANCK KEITA,  
RACHEL RÉGULIER, WEI HUANG  
★★★★★

to take risks," Cantet explains. "What some people consider as provocative in his attitude is for him a matter of putting the students on the same level as himself, a way of talking as peers." *The Class* is an extraordinary chronicle of one scholastic year in the lives of François and his students. It won last year's Palme d'Or, and is now an Oscar contender.

**AMONG THE CLASS'S** more extraordinary elements are its performances, with Bégaudeau himself playing the role of the teacher François and unseasoned kids playing each of the students. Cantet used three cameras on set, one to follow François, one to follow the central characters with whom François interacts, and one to catch spontaneous activity occurring outside the confines of the roughly established scenes. What emerges is akin to documentary, yet through its modicum of artifice it gets at truths

## REVUE

Laurent Cantet's *The Class* (*Entre les murs*) follows a group of racially mixed adolescent students over the course of a school year. Much of it is set in the French class of a energetic young teacher. Other scenes capture students interacting in the courtyard, teachers meeting in staff rooms, where they sometimes vent their panic, and, in some of the film's most entertaining and unnerving scenes, parent-teacher interviews. Tensions between kids and instructors rise and fall. Koumba, who used to be congenial, suddenly refuses to cooperate in class; Wei, a Chinese student still working on his French, has a parent deported; Souleymane acts tough and chilled but lashes out when cornered; Esmeralda, who wants to be either a rapper or a cop, talks back relentlessly—and she does so with enjoyable brio.

The *modus operandi* is simple and clean. The narrative is subordinate to the natural order of events. The aesthetic, somewhat reflective of the filming process, resembles documentary. There's a deceptive veneer of artlessness to *The Class* that contributes greatly to its arresting charm, but the elegant rhythms, un-telegraphed bursts of insight and resonant ambiguities represents a masterfully gauged collaboration between highly alert filmmakers and an unusually large and evenly represented ensemble. (The techniques of Robert Altman or Mike Leigh come to mind, though either would have made a very different movie.) The talk is at times sublimely spontaneous, and the editing by Robin Campillo, also one of the credited screenwriters, renders it lively and fluid. You ask me, the result is a genuine masterpiece.

The students are actual students from Françoise Dolto Junior High in Paris' 20th arrondissement. Their parents, with one exception, are the students' actual parents. These facts alone don't ensure verisimilitude—not to mention entertainment or intelligence—and its telling that while improvisation around set scenarios seems to have been the approach, few of the players are "playing themselves," as though such a thing were strictly possible. Cantet facilitated weekly workshops with the students for eight months. A key participant in these workshops was François Bégaudeau, an actual teacher and the author of the book on which the movie's based. Bégaudeau also plays "François," a version of himself. He's a charming, challenging ringleader, with a policy of open, respectful exchange, encouraging students to talk about their personal interests and insecurities to the point where we're provoked into wondering whether privacy is finally a detriment to learning and the self-realization that ideally accompanies it.

Maybe what's most fulfilling in this is the sheer power of performance as it occurs naturally in certain social contexts. The performances by Bégaudeau, whose laid-back theatricality is clearly a major component of his talent as a teacher, and the students are not virtuosic. They are the product of a natural inclination to discover some aspect of ourselves through interaction with others, pushing boundaries, thinking out loud. It's an inclination that's been smartly cultivated here. *The Class* looks like it was as much fun to make as it is to watch and listen to. And when its over, when the rooms are empty and the chairs left askew, there's something just a little sad about it's passing, yet also something exhilarating in its promise of renewal. ♥

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by Brian Gibson

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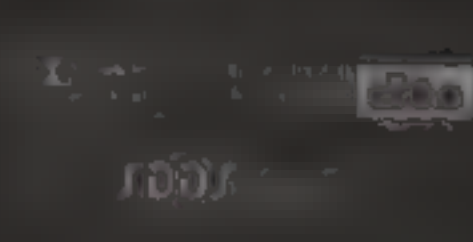
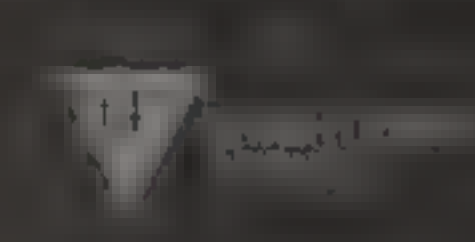
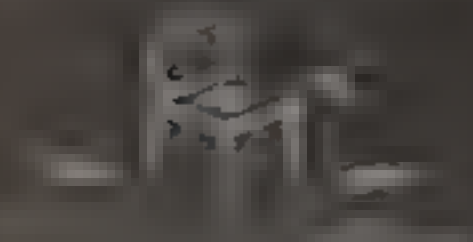
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# Modern war and peace

**FLICKS** **DVDETECTIVE**  
JOSEF BRAUN & BRIAN GIBSON

DAVID BERRY / david@vancouverweekly.com

Fittingly for a series written by the airtight scribes of *The Wire*, the spirit of *Generation Kill* (out now from HBO) is pretty much summed up perfectly before the title card is even shown. After an energetic, sharply edited firefight is revealed to be a simple training exercise, the Marines of the 1st Reconnaissance Battalion wind down, a short debriefing broken up by wisecracks and bravado. In a seemingly innocuous moment, a cynical sergeant begins to opine on the history of Middle Eastern warfare; what follows is a near-perfect summation of the bravery, will and stupidity that have led to 3000 years of constant warfare in the Middle East, all delivered while he's taking a piss.

David Simon and Ed Burns really are writing the 19th century Russian novels of television, series initially intriguing because of their awe-inspiring, groundingly realistic breadth, but ultimately satisfying for their poignant and non-judgmental depth. They ask questions both big and small, investigate grander themes as deeply as minor characters and up with a kind of all-encompassing fiction, a finely crafted artifice that nevertheless feels as varied and meaningful as real life.



The best example of that in *Generation Kill* is the streak of humour that runs through the series, a wry cynicism that's too rambunctious to really be called gallows humour. There are times when *Kill* almost feels more like a workplace comedy than a war movie, albeit one in which the day-to-day grind that shapes the characters' sensibilities is literally life and death. For the soldiers as much as for the audience, the humour here is a way of getting by, a counterpoint to nastiness of war that relieves as much as it ultimately enlightens. Profane, frequently crude, but always cathartic, it's what seems to give most of the marines in the series what they need to get through.

Though it details, quite literally, a platoon's worth of soldiers—almost any one of whom is detailed and drawn well enough to be used as a focal

point, from the Brando-voiced battalion commander Lt Col Stephen "Godfather" Ferrando to the baby-faced platoon leader Lt Nathaniel Fick—the series primarily follows the humvee commanded by Sgt Brad "Iceman" Colbert (Alexander Skarsgård, who looks the part of all-American GI Joe, despite his Swedish heritage). That's where *Rolling Stone*-scribe Evan Wright (played by Lee Tergesen, and upon whose book the series is based) is spending his embedding assignment. The vehicle is rounded out by the motormouthed, dry-witted Cpl Josh Ray Person (*Wire* vet James Ransone) and green, bloodthirsty machinegunner Lance Cpl Harold James Trombley (Billy Lush), with the interaction between the four of them forming the base that everything else takes off from.

DURING ONE of the many bonus documentaries HBO included in the release, Tergesen compares *Generation Kill* to a road trip movie, and he's not that far off, again the caveat being that the highway they're driving is through a war zone. Following the 1st Recon Marines through the early stages of the invasion, from Kuwait to Baghdad, the series is by no means without its tense, explosive moments—and by all means takes advantage of them—but it's the social aspects, whether they're in combat or whiling away downtime, that really define the film.

Some of the best of these moments are the frequent, impromptu sing-alongs held in the humvee. In particular, a truncated, off-key version of Wheaton's "Teenage Dirtbag," which is all the more powerful and funny for what precedes it, a tense, checkpoint stand-off that ends with the death of a young Iraqi girl. This kind of up-and-down is typical of the series, but again only serves to ground it, give it a real base upon which it can build.

And though I've focused mostly on some of the lighter elements, the series really does build a regiment's worth of incisive and affecting ideas and characters. Particularly thoughtful are its explorations into the necessity of war and warriors, examining both why and how we fight. Fitting for the series breadth, nearly every side of these issues is examined, and no easy opinion is allowed to stand. Peacenik ideals are undercut as frequently as warmonger ones, the brutality and inhumanity of war decried as often as it's suggested to be necessary. Above all, that might be the series' greatest intellectual trick: without justifying or judging, it explains what the hell is going on out there, as much through its opening, piss-accented monologue as through every questionable order, mishandled manoeuvre and qualified success that follows.

But again, even that seems a reductive way to look at it: *Generation Kill*'s biggest success is really the way it sacrifices neither breadth nor depth, immersing you entirely in its experience and letting you sort it out for yourself. ▽

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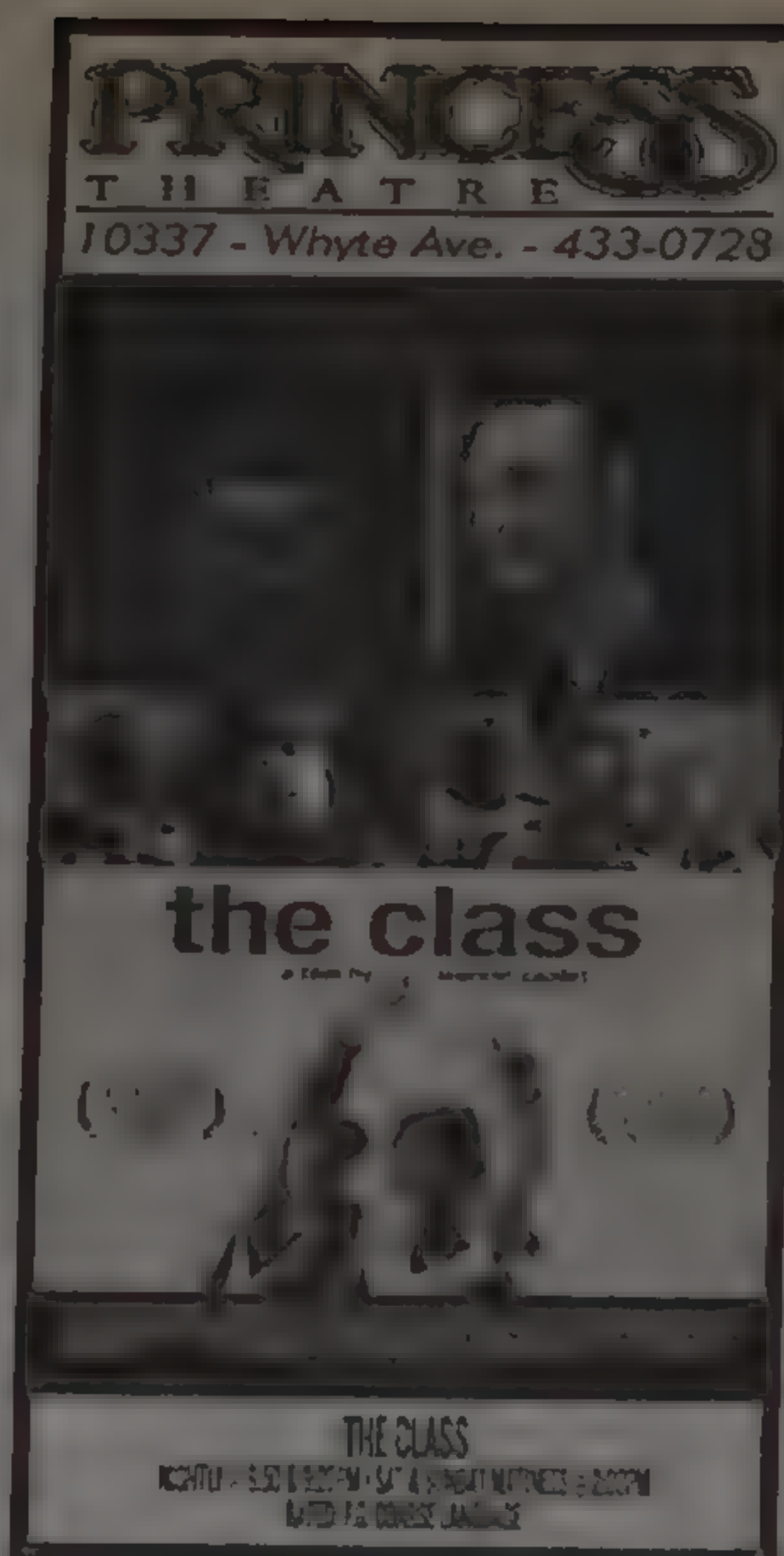
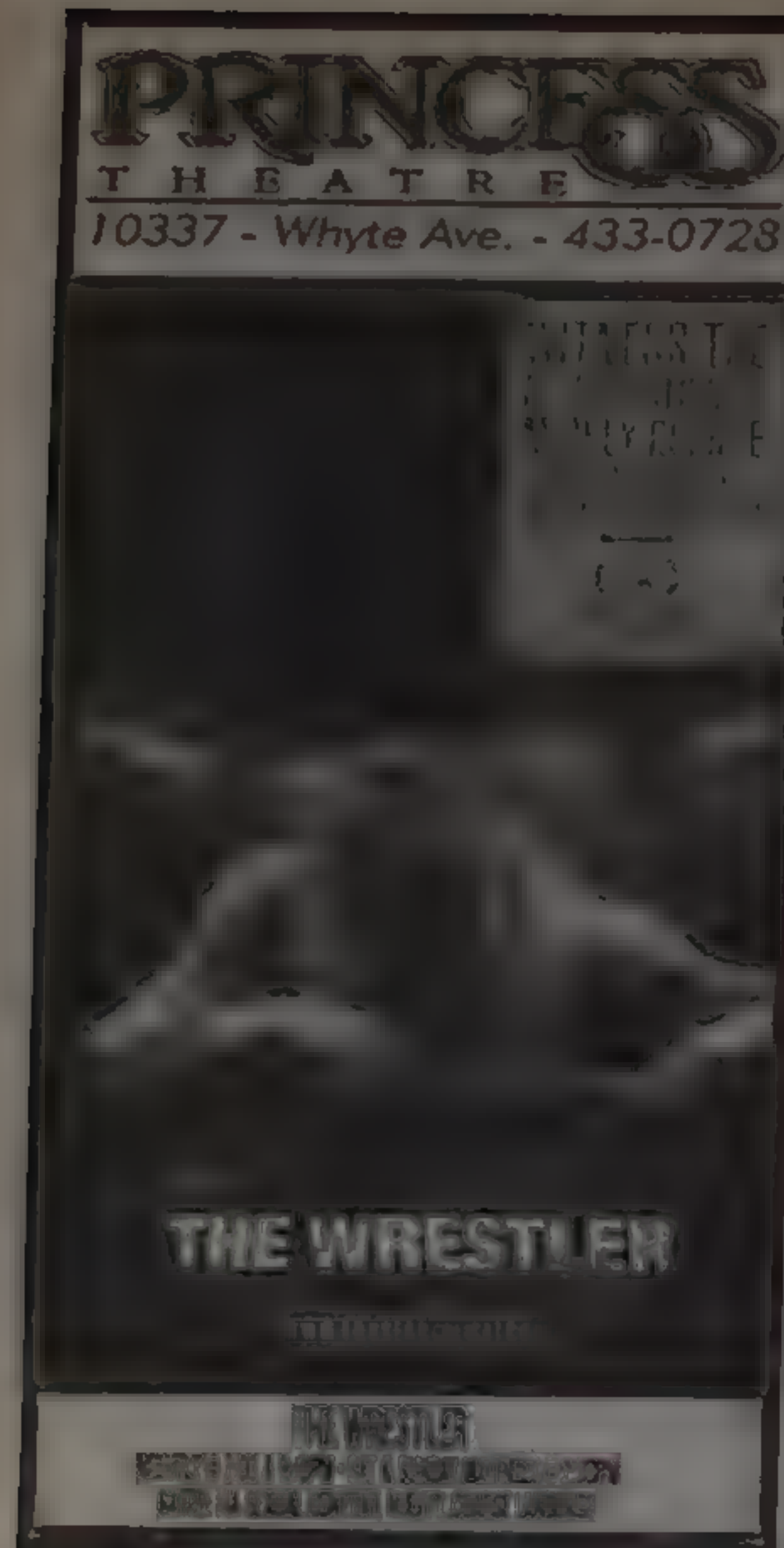
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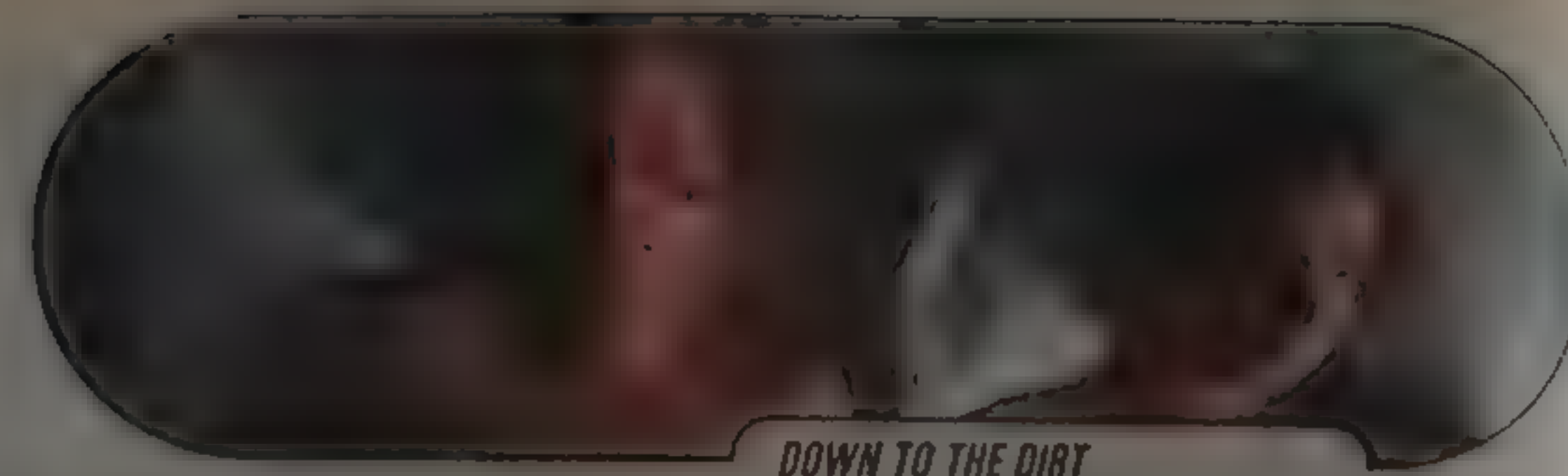
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# QUICK REVIEWS FILM CAPSULES



## OPENING THIS WEEK

### DOWN TO THE DIRT

DIRECTED BY JUSTIN SIMMS

WRITTEN BY SIMMS, SHERRY WHITE, JOEL HYNES  
STARRING HYNES, MYLENE SAVOIE, HUGH DILLON  
FRI, JAN 30, SUN, FEB 1 (7 PM)  
SAT, JAN 21, MON, FEB 2 (9 PM)

★

DAVID BERRY / david@vuweekly.com

Keith Kavanagh, the arrested—figuratively and, quite often, literally—drunken asshole at the centre of *Down to the Dirt*, is a writer. But not, like, a writer for a living, man: no he writes to live. We learn as much when, in a scene that would be more ridiculous if it wasn't so furiously earnest, he's chained to a bunk bed in the drunk tank, using his free hand to feverishly scribble his poetry.

Such is the way of most of *Down to the Dirt*, a story utterly rampant with clichés, yet so unselfconscious about them, so entirely enthralled with what painful, pure truths they must embody, it occasionally overcomes them. It's almost as though someone wrote a satire that someone else took seriously.

Alas, that's not the case: Keith (Joel Hynes, who also wrote the novel upon which it is based, which lends the film a

not-undeserved air of egotism) is the pained man-child of a million coming-of-age dramas, albeit with a Newfie accent. Outwardly he's a selfish, alcoholic prick, but, of course, deep down inside lies a tortured, sensitive soul trapped by his dirtbag town and his equally alcoholic, dismissive father.

Salvation seems to come in the form of Natasha (Mylene Savoie, who certainly looks the part of smalltown bombshell), the damaged woman who can see beyond Keith's hard exterior to the soft, gooey center. She wants to be, no shit, an actress, although we never see her do anything more than react to Keith's self-centered assholery—in this respect, Hynes the author fairly closely resembles his character Keith, in that both are ultimately not interested in anyone but Keith, everything else just being the wake of his self-destruction. Eventually she gets fed up and leaves him, which leaves Keith adrift and trying to get her back, with us in tow for the remainder of the too-long running time.

All that said, Keith is at least an occasionally enjoyable asshole—Hynes and director/screenwriter Justin Simms have a kind of crude-Canadiana sense of humour, sort of *22 Minutes* on a two-six of Crown Royal—though the instant he turns to self-pity (which happens a lot), things start to get ridiculous. At some point or another, Keith talks to basically every character about suicide—life is just so *fucking hard*, you know?—including, in a scene that no amount of pained earnestness could make unhilarious, a poisoned cat that he has to drown.

That such a scene of inner torment could be so ridiculous is some indication of the general success of *Down to the Dirt*. It's commitment to its cause is admirable—and some measure of proof that clichés are such because they transposed place or time—but it's ultimately so unselfconscious as to suggest brain death. In short: all heart, no head.

### NEW IN TOWN

DIRECTED BY JONAS ELMER

WRITTEN BY KEN RANCE, C JAY COX

STARRING RENÉE ZELLWEGER, HARRY CONNICK JR

★★

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vuweekly.com

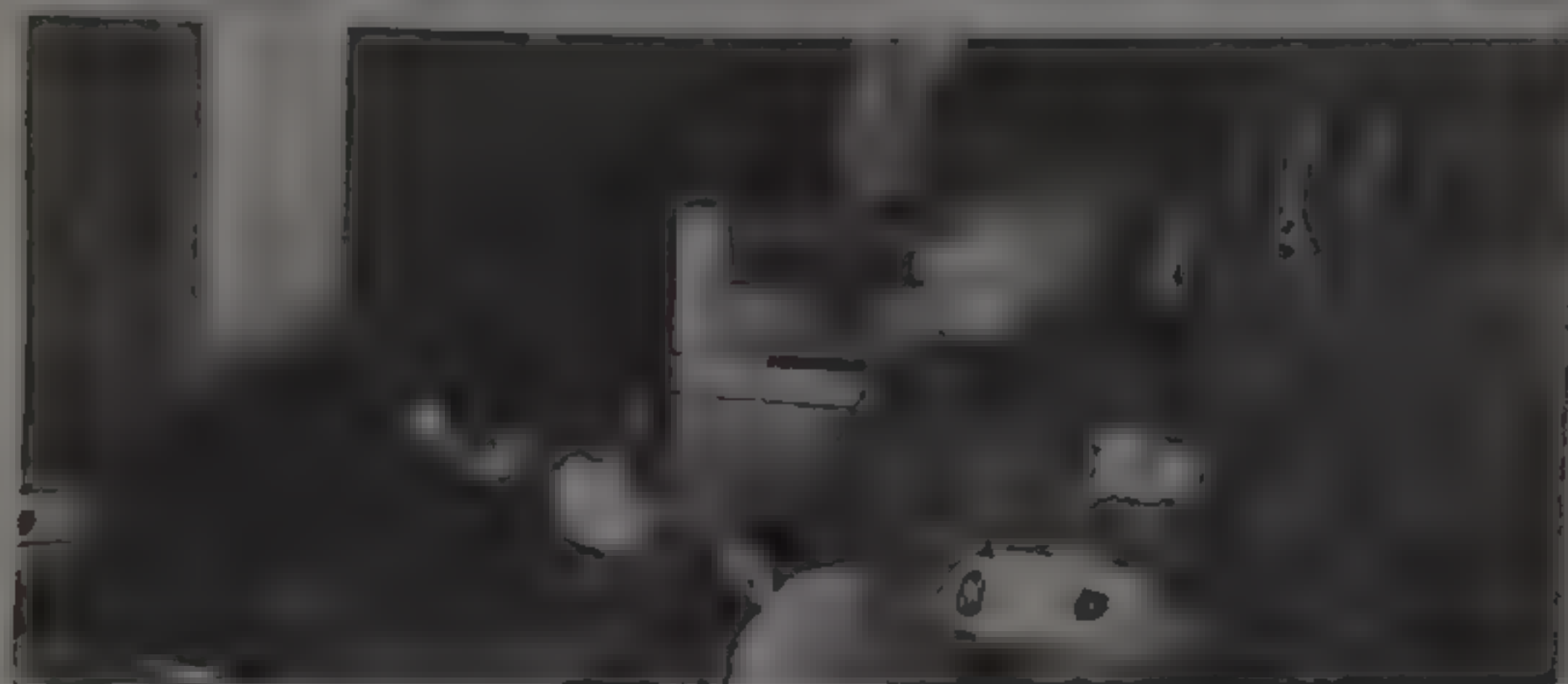
The topography, weather and architecture could be that of almost any town in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba or, no doubt, Minnesota, the film's setting and home state of

one of its authors. Nevertheless, the folks populating New Ulm feel very much on some self-consciously quirky cinematic non-place. The women of New Ulm especially, twitter on like autistic munchkins over their knits and low-carb tapioca. Yet they're no more the bi-product of some demented cliché than the arch, Miami-based corporate bunny with *Friends* hair and an endless array of heels these yokels are destined to humanize through scrapbooking and sufficient exposure to a bo-hunk single dad played, in an amusing reversal of type, by a jazz singer. So this fish out of water comedy contains within it a certain irony: it's a story about a clash of cultures in which neither culture is recognizably human.

What can I tell you? I suppose it's cute and all, but *New in Town*, helmed by Danish director Jonas Elmer, is pretty hard to take. Written by Ken Rance and C Jay Cox (surely, a pseudonym) it is so deeply formulaic as to inspire in you a certain awe when you're not banging your fist to your head whispering over and over, "please, make it stop." Watching Lucy the axe-woman (Renée Zellweger) and Ted the union rep (Harry Connick, Jr) meet-cute over meatloaf served up by the pathologically generous Blanche (Siobhan Fallon) or bond over a day of crow hunting, you might think to yourself that this is a film made by people who genuinely love people—but are these people or just caricatures? Is this romance or just cynical screenwriting-handbook determinism?

Zellweger's proven herself a deft comedienne elsewhere, but *New in Town* straightjackets her better impulses. Acting drunk-poo and falling face-first in a snow bank doesn't flatter anybody. Connick, a real trooper, fares better, really selling the schmaltz moments with striking aplomb, getting genuinely choked up in the much delayed dead wife speech telegraphed at the start of our story. It is the strange nature of this kind of movie that you get so desperate while watching it that you're ready to weep along with the leads at the drop of a hat. But it's hard to feel anything but impatience when the workingman-versus-the-corporate-creeps subplot kicks into full gear, mostly because rather than reflect something of the experience of real working people—which, yes, even a comedy with a happy ending can aspire to—we get a sham dreamed up by people who seem to have no idea what factory or white-collar life is like. As we sink ever more into recession, this is just what we need, a bogus fairy tale.

metro CINEMA JAN 29 - FEB 2



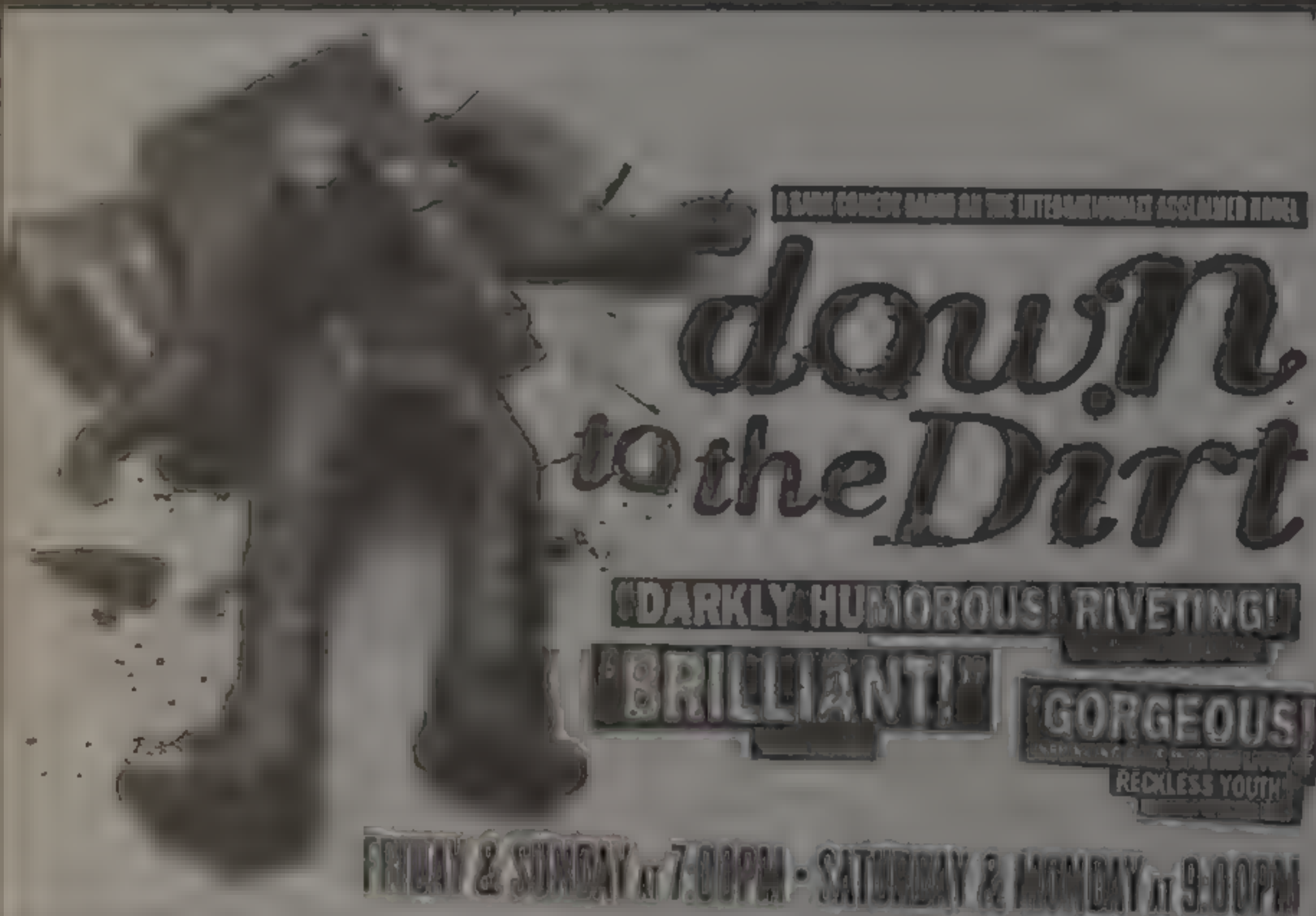
## UNFORGOTTEN

DIRECTED BY CARLO GHIONI THURSDAY JANUARY 29 at 7:30PM

## Tkaronto

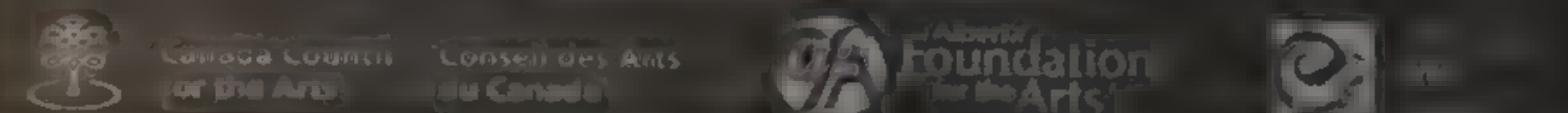
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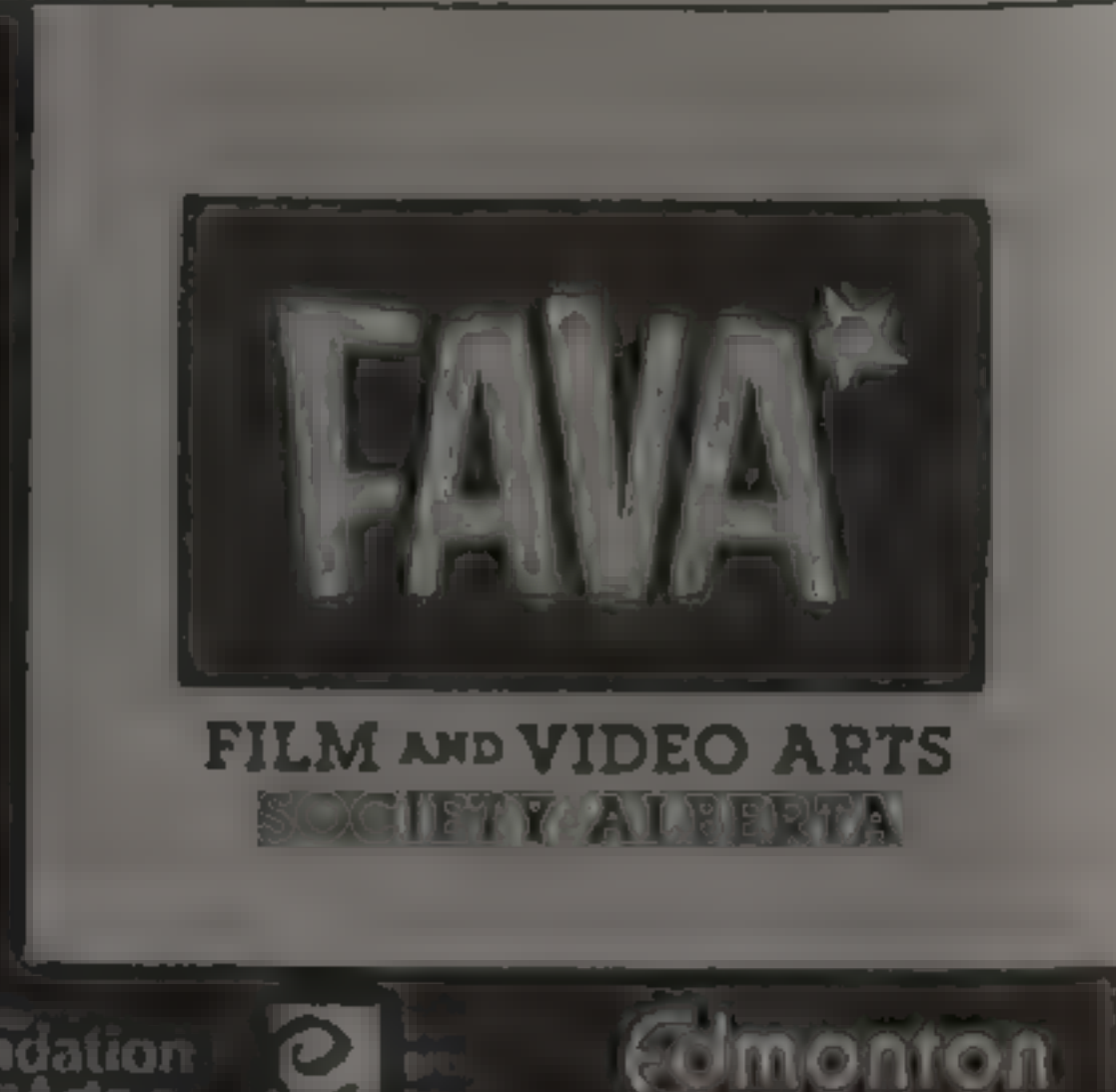
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**TKARONTO**  
 WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY SHANE BELCOURT  
 STARRING DUANE MURRAY, MELANIE MCLAREN  
 JAN 30, SUN, FEB 1 (9:15 PM)  
 JAN 31, MON, FEB 2 (7 PM)  
 100 CINEMA (9828 - 101A AVE)  
 ★★☆☆

JONATHAN BUSCH / jonathan@vuwweekly.com  
 In an emotionally compelling, low-budget first feature, writer-director Shane Belcourt portrays two dangerously compatible thirty-somethings sharing a house in Toronto, both of whom are forced to confront their individualities the further they pursue a friendship. At the centre of their dilemma, they find difficulty expressing their mutual Canadian Aboriginal background in careers that demand them to do so. *Tkaronto* asks questions of cultural identity in a subtly investigatory manner that seduces and charms its audience.

Ray (Duane Murray) is enlisted for a television production in Toronto, taking temporary leave from his pregnant wife in Vancouver. Jolene (Melanie McLaren) is painting a series of portraits of First Nations elders. Sharing acquaintance with elder Max (*Corner Gas'* Lorne Cardinal), Ray and Jolene become roommates. Ray's job as an Aboriginal consultant gets frustrating when, on his first day, his Métis status is questioned as he doesn't "look Indian." Jolene's research interview with Max offers kind, valuable advice on her potentially influential role in the Aboriginal community, but finds her lacking confidence in only knowing so much of cultural practice. Ray and Jolene both seek an ear to listen, quickly finding a common ground during quiet dinners and walks throughout the city. The result is a friendship that grows as confusing as it is charismatic—the freedom to share each other's woes has them questioning their relationships back home.

*Tkaronto* is an awkward production, with fumbling edits and occasionally coldly synched dialogue. But it has an edge—Ray and Jolene are humble, sexy, and real, gracefully framed in familiar slacker-friendly settings. During a late night stroll, they stumble across a stern psychic (Rae Ellen Boudie) who outwardly mocks their pursuit of life's meaning. After a tarot reading, they perch themselves on a sidewalk and unload their worries for several minutes in a scene that lasts a long time and goes hardly anywhere. But Murray and McLaren's eager performances against the warm glow of the streetlights are so easy to get lost in, like a cozy waltz after midnight (which becomes literal near the film's climax).

Equally refreshing about *Tkaronto* is an approach to Aboriginal issues through quieted domestic drama. Ray confides to a very attentive Max a particular worry over how his child will embrace his Métis status. Cardinal, with thoughtful, sympathetic eyes, delivers a wise, effective performance as Max, challenging the viewer via sturdy emotion. The scene results in as much a pondering of Max's advice as Ray's mere confessional anxiety. *Tkaronto* is as much about the influential aesthetic of faces, bodies and vocal timbre. While no means heavy-handed, it comes to the table with a firm agenda of the crisis of cultural subjectivity.

In the wake of a cutthroat awards season (I refer as much to the critics as I do to the audiences lined up around the block to see *Slumdog Millionaire*), *Tkaronto* pays mind to its modest Canadi-

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

# FILM WEEKLY

All showtimes are subject to change at any time. Please contact theatre to confirm.

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**TAKEN** (14A, violence)  
 Fri-Sat 7:00, 9:00; Sun-Thu 8:00;  
 Sat-Sun 1:30  
**VALKYRIE** (PG, violence, coarse language)  
 Fri-Sat 9:00; Sun-Wed 8:00  
**BEDTIME STORIES** (G)  
 Fri-Sat 7:00; Sat-Sun 1:30  
**STONE OF DESTINY** (STC)  
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## CINEMA IN THE SUBURBS

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 Fri-Sat 1:10, 4:05, 7:05, 9:50, 12:15; Sun-Thu 1:10, 4:05, 7:05, 9:50

**FOUR CHRISTMASSES** (PG, language may offend, crude content)  
 Fri-Sat 4:25, 9:20, 11:30; Sun-Thu 4:25, 9:20

**AUSTRALIA** (PG, language may offend, violence)  
 Fri-Sat 12:50, 4:05, 7:40, 11:00, Sun-Thu 12:50, 4:05, 7:40

**TRANSPORTER 3** (14A)  
 Fri-Sat 1:55, 4:35, 7:10, 9:55, 12:10; Sun-Thu 1:55, 4:35, 7:10, 9:55

**TWILIGHT** (PG, violence)  
 Fri-Sat 1:20, 4:10, 6:55, 9:40, 12:10; Sun-Thu 1:20, 4:10, 6:55, 9:40

**QUANTUM OF SOLACE** (14A)  
 Fri-Sat 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 9:45, 12:05; Sun-Thu 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 9:45

**MADAGASCAR: ESCAPE 2 AFRICA** (G)  
 Fri-Sat 1:35, 4:40, 7:00, 9:15, 11:35; Sun-Thu 1:35, 4:40, 7:00, 9:15

**ROLE MODELS** (14A, crude content, coarse language)  
 Fri-Sat 2:05, 4:50, 7:30, 10:00, 12:20; Sun-Thu 2:05, 4:50, 7:30, 10:00

**HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL 3: SENIOR YEAR** (G)  
 Daily 1:30, 7:05

**CHANGELING** (14A)  
 Daily 4:00, 9:30

**BEVERLY HILLS CHIHUAHUA** (G)  
 Fri-Sat 2:00, 4:45, 7:20, 9:35, 11:45; Sun-Thu 2:00, 4:45, 7:20, 9:35

**RACHEL GETTING MARRIED** (14A, coarse language, mature themes)  
 Fri-Sat 1:25, 4:15, 6:45, 9:25, 11:40; Sun-Thu 1:25, 4:15, 6:45, 9:25

**NIGHTS IN RODANTHE** (PG)  
 Daily 1:15, 6:40

## CINEPLEX ROBIN NORTH

14231 137th Avenue, 780.732.2238

**TAKEN** (14A, violence)  
 No passes Daily 12:30, 3:00, 5:15, 7:40, 10:10

**THE UNINVITED** (14A, frightening scenes)  
 Daily 1:50, 4:40, 8:10, 10:35

**NEW IN TOWN** (PG, coarse language)  
 Fri-Tue, Thu 1:20, 3:40, 6:40, 9:10; Wed 3:40, 6:40, 9:10; Star and Strollers Screening: Wed 1:00

**UNDERWORLD: RISE OF THE LYCANS** (18A, gory scenes)  
 No passes Fri 12:10, 2:45, 5:20, 8:00, 10:40; Sat-Thu 12:10, 2:45, 5:20, 8:00, 10:40

**HOTEL FOR DOGS** (G)  
 Daily 12:05, 2:30, 4:50, 7:15, 9:30

**MY BLOODY VALENTINE 3D** (18A, gory scenes, nudity, sexual content)  
 Digital 3d Fri 12:45, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50, 10:30

**DEFIANCE** (14A, violence, coarse language)

Daily 12:50, 3:50, 7:00, 10:15  
**BRIDE WARS** (PG)  
 Fri, Sun-Thu 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:20, 9:50; Sat 5:00, 7:20, 9:50

**THE UNBORN** (14A, violence, frightening scenes)  
 Daily 9:20

**BEDTIME STORIES** (G)  
 Daily 12:00

**MARLEY AND ME** (PG)  
 Daily 1:30, 4:10, 6:45

**THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON** (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children)  
 Daily 2:20, 6:20, 9:55

**THE WRESTLER** (14A, nudity, coarse language, sexual content)  
 Daily 1:40, 4:20, 7:10, 9:50

**GRAN TORINO** (14A, language may offend)  
 Fri-Tue, Thu 1:00, 3:45, 7:05, 10:05; Wed 3:45, 7:05, 10:05; Star and Strollers Screening: Wed 1:00

**SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE** (14A, violence)  
 Daily 1:10, 4:00, 6:50, 9:40

**CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA** (STC)  
 Sat 11:00

## CINEPLEX OROON SOUTH

1500 St. James St. (780) 451-1712

**TAKEN** (14A, violence)  
 No passes Daily 12:00, 2:30, 4:45, 7:40, 10:15

**THE UNINVITED** (14A, frightening scenes)  
 Daily 12:20, 2:50, 5:10, 7:55, 10:25

**NEW IN TOWN** (PG, coarse language)  
 Fri-Wed 1:40, 4:25, 7:10, 9:35; Thu 4:25, 7:10, 9:35; Star and Strollers Screening: Thu 1:00

**INKHEART** (PG, frightening scenes)  
 Daily 1:15, 4:20, 7:20, 10:00

**UNDERWORLD: RISE OF THE LYCANS** (18A, gory scenes)  
 No passes Fri 12:10, 2:45, 5:00, 7:50, 10:30; Sat-Thurs 12:10, 2:45, 5:00, 7:50, 10:30

**LOVE ME AGAIN (IN FILIPINO)** (PG)  
 Daily 12:55, 3:45, 6:50, 9:40

**PAUL BLART: MALL COP** (PG)  
 Fri, Sun-Thu 12:15, 2:40, 4:50, 7:45, 10:20; Sat 12:15, 2:30, 4:35, 7:45, 10:20

**HOTEL FOR DOGS** (G)  
 Fri-Wed 1:30, 4:10, 6:45, 9:20; Thurs 1:30, 4:10, 9:20

**MY BLOODY VALENTINE 3D** (18A, gory scenes, nudity, sexual content)  
 Digital 3d Fri-Tue, Thu 3:40, 7:30, 9:55; Wed 3:40, 9:55

**BRIDE WARS** (PG)  
 Daily 7:25, 10:05

**REVOLUTIONARY ROAD** (14A, coarse language, mature themes)  
 Fri-Sun, Tue-Thu 12:40, 3:30, 6:55, 9:50; Mon 12:40, 3:30, 9:50

**MARLEY AND ME** (PG)  
 Daily 1:10, 4:30

**THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON** (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children)  
 Daily 12:30, 4:05, 8:00

**VALKYRIE** (PG, violence, coarse language)  
 Fri, Sun-Thurs 12:20, 3:20, 6:40; Sat 4:05, 6:40

**GRAN TORINO** (14A, language may offend)  
 Daily 1:20, 4:15, 7:15, 10:10

**DOUBT** (PG, mature themes)  
 Digital Cinema Daily 1:00

**THE READER** (18A, sexual content)  
 Daily 1:25, 3:50, 7:00, 9:45

**FROST/NIXON** (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children)  
 Daily 9:30

**SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE** (14A, violence)  
 Fri-Wed 12:50, 4:00, 7:00, 10:20; Thurs 4:00, 7:05, 10:20; Star and Strollers Screening: Thu 1:00

**CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA** (STC)  
 Sat 1:00

## CITY CENTRE 9

10200-102 Ave. 780.421.7020

**GRAN TORINO** (14A, language may offend)  
 Daily 1:20, 4:15, 7:15, 10:10

9:50  
**THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON** (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children)  
 Digital Presentation Daily 12:00, 3:40, 7:20

**TAKEN** (14A, violence)  
 DTS Digital Daily 12:20, 3:10, 7:10, 9:35

**UNDERWORLD: RISE OF THE LYCANS** (18A, gory scenes)  
 Dolby Stereo Digital Fri, Sun-Thu 12:40, 3:35, 7:00, 9:25; Sat 3:35, 7:00, 9:25

**FROST/NIXON** (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children)  
 DTS Digital Fri-Tue, Thu 12:30, 3:30, 6:40, 9:40; Wed 12:30, 3:30, 9:40

**REVOLUTIONARY ROAD** (14A, coarse language, mature themes)  
 DTS Digital Daily 12:25, 3:20, 6:30, 9:20

**OPUS ARTE: LA FILLE MAL GARDÉE (BALLET)** (Classification not available)  
 Digital Presentation Daily 12:10, 3:10, 6:10, 9:10

## CINEVIEW 16

3211 104 Ave. 780.472.6000

**GRAN TORINO** (14A, language may offend)  
 Fri, Mon-Thu 4:05, 6:45, 9:25; Sat-Sun 1:20, 4:05, 6:45, 9:25

**HOTEL FOR DOGS** (G)  
 Fri, Mon-Thu 4:00, 6:30, 9:00; Sat-Sun 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00

**PAUL BLART: MALL COP** (PG)  
 Fri, Mon-Thu 4:30, 6:50, 9:10; Sat-Sun 1:50, 4:30, 6:50, 9:10

**MY BLOODY VALENTINE 3D** (18A, gory scenes, nudity, sexual content)  
 Digital 3d Fri, Mon-Thu 4:40, 7:15, 9:40; Sat-Sun 1:40, 4:40, 7:15, 9:40

**INKHEART** (PG, frightening scenes)  
 Fri, Mon-Thu 3:50, 6:35; Sat-Sun 1:10, 3:50, 6:35

**UNDERWORLD: RISE OF THE LYCANS** (18A, gory scenes)  
 Fri, Mon-Thu 4:50, 7:30, 9:50; Sat-Sun 2:00, 4:50, 7:30, 9:50

**FROST/NIXON** (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children)  
 Daily 9:15

**THE UNINVITED** (14A, frightening scenes)  
 Fri, Mon-Thu 4:35, 7:25, 9:45; Sat-Sun 2:10, 4:35, 7:25, 9:45

**NEW IN TOWN** (PG, coarse language)  
 Fri, Mon-Thu 4:10, 6:40, 9:20; Sat-Sun 1:25, 4:10, 6:40, 9:20

**THE WRESTLER** (14A, nudity, coarse language, sexual content)  
 Fri, Mon-Thu 4:20, 7:00, 9:35; Sat-Sun 1:00, 4:20, 7:00, 9:35

**TAKEN** (14A, violence)  
 Fri, Mon-Thu 4:45, 7:10, 9:30; Sat-Sun 1:45, 4:45, 7:10, 9:30

## DUGGAN CINEMA-CAMROSE

660148 Ave. Camrose, 780.698.2144

**VALKYRIE** (PG, violence, coarse language)  
 Daily 6:55, 9:10

**THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON** (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children)  
 Daily 7:30; Sat-Sun 1:45

**UNDERWORLD: RISE OF THE LYCANS** (18A, gory scenes)  
 Daily 7:10 9:00; Sat-Sun 2:15

**HOTEL FOR DOGS** (G)  
 Sat-Sun 2:10

**PAUL BLART: MALL COP** (PG)  
 Daily 7:05 9:05; Sat-Sun 2:05

**GRAN TORINO** (14A, language may offend)  
 Daily 6:50 9:05; Sat-Sun 1:50

## GALAXY-SHERWOOD PARK

2020 Sherwood Drive, 780.416.9150

**TAKEN** (14A, violence)  
 No passes Fri 4:15, 7:15, 9:40; Sat-Sun 12:30, 4:15, 7:15, 9:40; Mon-Thurs 7:15, 9:40

**THE UNINVITED** (14A, frightening scenes)  
 Fri 4:40, 7:40, 10:20; Sat-Sun 1:20, 4:40, 7:40, 10:20; Mon-Thurs 7:40, 10:20

**INKHEART** (PG, frightening scenes)  
 Fri 3:50, 6:30, 9:20; Sat-Sun 12:50,

3:50, 6:30, 9:20; Mon-Thurs 6:30, 9:20

**UNDERWORLD: RISE OF THE LYCANS** (18A, gory scenes)  
 No passes Fri 4:30, 7:30, 10:10; Sat-Sun 1:30, 4:30, 7:30, 10:10; Mon-Thu 7:30, 10:10

**PAUL BLART: MALL COP** (PG)  
 Fri 4:20, 7:20, 9:50; Sat-Sun 12:20, 4:20, 7:20, 9:50; Mon-Thu 7:20, 9:50

**HOTEL FOR DOGS** (G)  
 Fri 3:40, 6:50, 9:30; Sat-Sun 1:10, 3:40, 6:50, 9:30; Mon-Thu 6:50, 9:30

**BRIDE WARS** (PG)  
 Fri-Sun 3:20, 6:40, 9:10; Mon-Thu 6:40, 9:10

**MARLEY AND ME** (PG)  
 Sat-Sun 12:10

**THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON** (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children)  
 Fri 3:30, 8:00; Sat-Sun 12:00, 3:30, 8:00; Mon-Thu 8:00

**GRAN TORINO** (14A, language may offend)  
 Fri 4:00, 7:00, 10:00; Sat-Sun 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00; Mon-Thu 7:00, 10:00

**SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE** (14A, violence)  
 Fri 3:40, 7:10, 10:15; Sat-Sun 12:40, 3:40, 7:10, 10:15; Mon-Thurs 7:10, 10:15

## GARNEAU

6712-109 St. 780.433.0728

**SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE** (14A, violence)  
 Daily 6:50, 9:25; Sat-Sun 2:00

## GRANDIN THEATRE

Grandin Mall, 814 Winston Churchill Ave. (780) 451-1712

**INKHEART** (PG, frightening scenes)  
 Daily 12:55, 3:05, 5:05, 7:10

**THE UNBORN** (14A, violence, frightening scenes)  
 Daily 9:10

**UNDERWORLD: RISE OF THE LYCANS** (18A, gory scenes)  
 Daily 1:20, 3:20, 5:20, 7:20, 9:20

**HOTEL FOR DOGS** (G)  
 Daily 1:00, 3:00, 4:50, 6:40

**THE CURIOUS CASE OF BENJAMIN BUTTON** (PG, coarse language, not recommended for young children)  
 Daily 8:30

**TAKEN** (14A, violence)  
 No passes Daily 12:40, 2:25, 4:10, 5:55, 7:45, 9:35

**PAUL BLART: MALL COP** (PG)  
 Daily 12:35, 2:20, 4:05, 5:50, 7:40, 9:25

## LEBOC CINEMAS

780.455.8726

**HOTEL FOR DOGS** (G)  
 Sat-Sun 1:05, 3:15

**UNDERWORLD: RISE OF THE LYCANS** (18A, gory scenes)  
 Daily 7:10, 9:25; Sat-Sun 1:10, 3:25

**INKHEART** (PG, frightening scenes)  
 Daily 6:55, 9:20; Sat-Sun 12:55, 3:20

**GRAN TORINO** (14A, language may offend)  
 Daily 7:00, 9:30

**TAKEN** (14A, violence)  
 Daily 12:30, 2:45, 5:00, 7:15, 9:30

## METRO CINEMA

9828-101A Ave. Citadel Theatre, 780.455.8726

**DOWN TO THE DIRT** (14A)  
 Fri, Sun 7:00; Sat, Mon 9:00

**TKARONTO** (PG, coarse language)  
 Fri, Sun 9:15; Sat, Mon 7:00

## PARKLAND CINEMA 7

130 Century Crossing, Spruce Grove, 780.972.2332, Serving Spruce Grove, Stony Plain, Parkland County

**TAKEN</**



## FILM CAPSULES

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

ana, where remarkable films are made and not often enough seen.

## NOW PLAYING

### FROST/NIXON

DIRECTED BY ROY ROYAL

WRITTEN BY PETER MORGAN

STARRING MICHAEL SHEEN, FRANK LANGELLA

★★★

JOSEF BRAUN / josef@vnewweekly.com

Success in America is unlike success anywhere else, says David Frost. Failure, one assumes, achieves an equally singular stature. And so the terms are set for *Frost/Nixon*, Ron Howard's movie of Peter Morgan's play, which was indeed successful in America, and was inspired by something that took place there in 1977, when English talk show host Frost sat with former President Richard Nixon for nearly 30 hours of interviews that made broadcast history. Both sought to redeem failures, or slumps, in their careers. The event wasn't exactly a revelation, but it did find an underdog unsettling a formidable orator sufficiently to yield something like an apology for abuses of power. The movie, then, is timely, coming precisely when millions crave to see another US President confess to similar sins.

For all his monstrous associations, Nixon's often flattered by Hollywood, and Frank Langella, with his handsomeness, sonorous voice and effortless charisma, is a delight to watch even if he misses those traces of sheer weirdness that perhaps no actor need do justice to since we have the real Nixon so heavily documented for pos-

terity. I adore Langella, but I don't think he quite escapes the confines of impersonation. His facial mask is impressive, but it tethers him to too limited an array of expressions. Michael Sheen, playing an easy-to-dismiss puff-meister, has to work harder and thus gets us more involved as Frost, the film's actual protagonist, and one rather aligned in his obstacles with Sheen's Tony Blair in *The Queen*, also written by Morgan. It's a part that probably won't get the same accolades but which the story absolutely hinges on, especially when the movie's authors manage the material in less than inspired ways.

Morgan's written his own adaptation, and while you can't blame the guy for wanting to "open up" the play, it's hard not to notice that the immediacy and tension of the theatre is sorely missed. The action keeps getting diluted, and the supporting roles are at times left too exposed to scrutiny, like Rebecca Hall's Caroline Cushing, who hangs around a lot but is the epitome of arm decoration for the male lead, a way of ensuring that we know he's not gay.

Howard for his part does nothing to spoil the entertainment value of *Frost/Nixon*—he's far too safe a director for that—but he doesn't stir it up much either, despite a Hans Zimmer score that at times sounds better suited to a spy thriller or submarine movie. There's a compelling statement near the end where investigative journalist James Reston, played by Sam Rockwell, talks about "the reductive power of the close-up." Howard, in his typically workmanlike but dazzlingly unreflexive way, directs *Frost/Nixon* as though he hadn't read this page in the script, offering us, well, a whole lot of close-ups. And boy, are they ever reductive. It doesn't seem like Howard considered how a movie version might offer something vital that the play—not to mention the actual televised event, with its ample number of close-ups—could not. But he's dutifully revived a genuinely interesting media landmark and let it play as a fun drama, and that's reason enough to check it out.

### UNDERWORLD: RISE OF THE LYCANS

DIRECTED BY PATRICK TATOPOULOS

WRITTEN BY DANNY MCBRIDE, DIRK BLACKMAN,

HOWARD MCKEIN

STARRING BILL NIGHY, MICHAEL SHEEN, RHONA MITRA

★★

OMAR MOUALLEM / omar@vnewweekly.com

In America, the first black president may have been sworn in and taken the country full circle from slavery to highest office, but in the underworld, slavery is still prevalent. The slaves are considered neither man nor animal, but a manimal of sorts. They are werewolves. Lycans. But change gonna come.

*Underworld: Rise of the Lycans* is the third movie in the series, and its story stands alone. (With two-thirds of the original cast gone, did the writers have a choice?) Either way, it helps to be stand-alone when the plot is elementary and the characters one-dimensional. In this icy blue English world, the land is ruled by a despotic vampire, Viktor (Bill Nighy), and it is tended by lycans.

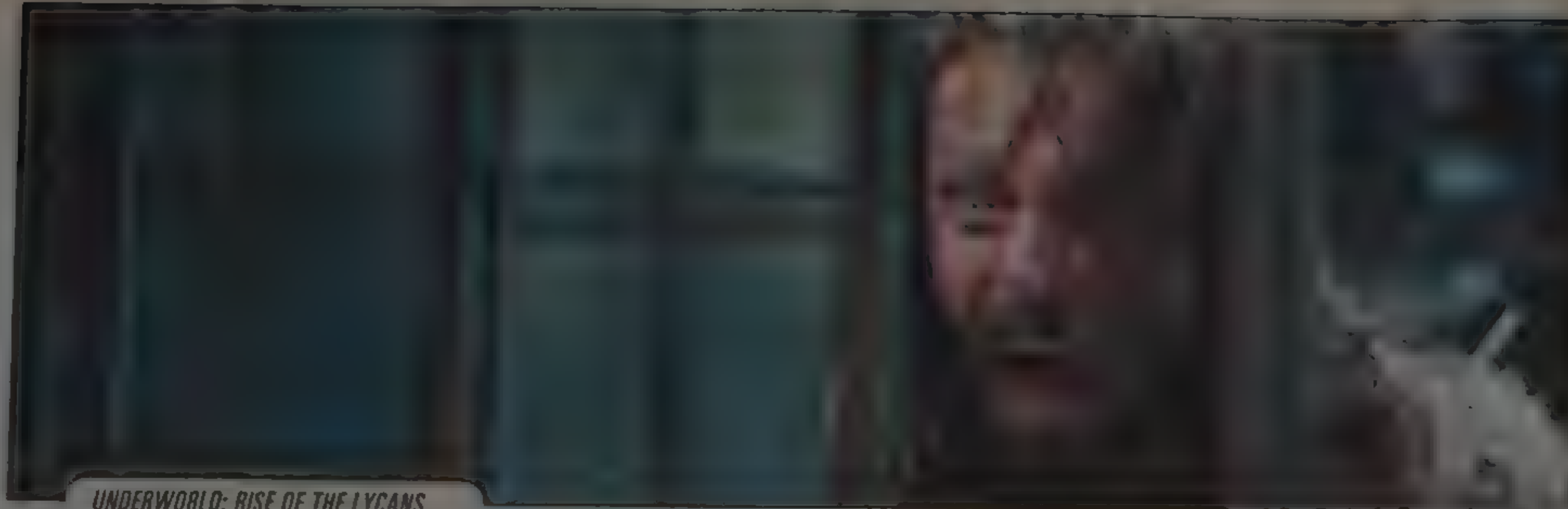
Of the wolves, Lucien (Michael Sheen), is Viktor's favourite—the Uncle Tom of the

underworld—because he has more human blood in him than most lycans. But if Viktor were to ever learn that Lucien is his daughter's secret lover, Lucien's privileges would be stripped and he would likely be executed. Even when you are the master's favourite, there are race roles. And here, interracial dating, especially with Sonja (Rhona Mitra), the vampire dynasty heiress, is decades away.

*Underworld* has a captivating story, one that brings the viewer in even if that viewer is not of the typical fanbase—you know, the fanbase spotted in cafés drawing fairies in their sketchbooks. And although the characters are all either good or bad, anti-nuance and melodramatic as a Telemundo teen drama, it's dynamics are neat, especially when Viktor considers creating a privileged class of lycans to help protect the castle against the threat of their liberated, pillaging fellow manimals.

But all that excitement and intrigue is a means to a battle that seemingly never ends. It's like director Patrick Tatopoulos and his team of writers baited us to the theatre promising *Romeo and Juliet* and switched to *300* within a few frames. After that, it's one arrow shot into a chest after another, interspersed with battle cries and everyone's favourite wolf-sergeant speech to lift our spirits in war, à la *Braveheart*.

Although *Underworld* is centuries away from electing a lycan president—or elections, for that matter—seeing where this franchise will go next should be interesting. The *Underworld* franchise definitely has enough soul and creativity for a fourth instalment, but there needs to be more balance so that those who came for war aren't yawning for the first 40 minutes, and those who came for drama aren't rolling their eyes for the last. ♥



UNDERWORLD: RISE OF THE LYCANS

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# One note at a time

## Red Shag Carpet returns to the stage

EDEN MUNRO / eden@vueweekly.com

**T**hen the touring started. After 250 dates it's too much fun to stop."

Those lines come directly from **Red Shag Carpet's** online biography; given that it's been nearly two full years now since the group last graced an Edmonton stage, it seems as though something may be amiss.

"I think we maybe need to update our bio," laughs bassist Dan Yarmon. "That bio was written probably three years ago. After we released *Lift and Drop*, which is our second album ... I think we must have played close to 200 shows that following year and that was like a year and a half doing that.

"We started a lot of new songs but we weren't finishing any new songs, we weren't really practising too much," he continues. "I think we kind of lost the balance that a band should have and ultimately just burnt out. I mean it's nothing unusual—it happens to most bands after they release

an album—they tour like crazy and then they take a break."

It's true that many bands do hit a wall and take a break after a long, intense period of activity—so do peo-

**PREVIEW** FRI, JAN 30 (6 PM)  
**RED SHAG CARPET**  
WITH FAT DAVE  
HAVEN SOCIAL CLUB, \$10

ple in just about every other field. You work and work and then you take a break. And while some bands do fall apart in the aftermath, that's not the case with Red Shag Carpet. In fact, the group never even planned to take a break in the first place, it just worked out that way.

"We were just talking about it the other day, and the last show that we played—I think it was New Year's Eve 2006 going into 2007 down in Fernie—it was so much fun, but we were weren't thinking we were going to take a break after that show," Yarmon recalls. "We were probably all assum-



ing we'd get together next week and see what we want to do next, but we didn't, and a month went past and none of us said anything about practising again or anything and then six months later we said 'Oh, jeez, do you guys want to try to have a practice?' and we tried to practise and we didn't have that energy."

**BUT A LITTLE TIME OFF** can do wonders for the soul; with everyone indulging in their own activities—Yarmon returned to school and drum-

mer Allan Pickard took up the sticks for Happy, while guitarist Ted Ani recorded a solo album—the guys tried a few off-the-cuff sessions until they finally felt that they had some new song ideas worth pursuing. Then, they decided to throw themselves right into the fire, booking a few shows in Canmore over the holidays.

"That first show in Canmore, December 27 or whatever it was, there was one song where we hadn't really practised much and when I tried to think about the song I

couldn't really remember exactly where my fingers went," Yarmon chuckles of the band's return to the stage. "As soon as you start to think about it you don't know what to do, but I just kind of went in blindly and your fingers kind of do remember the way it goes, which is a really strange thing. Literally, I wrote down the first note on the setlist of every song, and on one of the songs I wrote down the wrong note. So the first show was a little bit rusty, but it came back pretty quick." ▼

# ¡Yo quiero the Mae Shi!

JAMES STEWART / jstewart@vueweekly.com

**T**aco Bell gave us \$500 in Taco Bell money for some contest. I have no idea how it came about or who submitted our name to them. It was free food, so that was nice. I don't know why some people want to make it political or whatever—it's just burritos," shrugs the **Mae Shi** drummer Jacob Cooper.

It's not like receiving a small fast-food sponsorship is the same as having your music in a commercial to sell scud missiles or something, right?

"Well, that would be pretty cool too. I don't really care how people interpret the music, or how they use it. I don't care if some company uses

**PREVIEW** SAT, JAN 31 (9 PM)  
**THE MAE SHI**  
WITH BAYONETS!!!, KOSMISCHE  
PAWN SHOP, \$15

our song to promote themselves," he laughs. "Fuck it."

The Mae Shi has been touring hard for the last year on the heels of its critically acclaimed 2008 release, *HLL-LYH*. Rolling from town to town with a blistering live show may seem second nature to the band, but it wasn't always so easy. With a revolving and shifting line-up over the years, the Mae Shi found itself becoming an increasingly local phenomenon. With some factions of the band content to

create mayhem within the confines of local spaces and others looking to hit the road, the Mae Shi found itself becoming divided—literally.

"I was asked to join specifically so we could tour behind the record," Cooper explains. "Before that, the band really focused on playing in LA—it was much more of a regional thing. But as people began leaving the band because of marriage, or college, or just growing out of it, there was a push to get people involved that would be able to tour and keep some momentum going. The band still writes with original members, but we can also function separately as a mobile unit."

So as a long time friend and fan of

the band, Cooper suddenly found himself absorbed into one of his favourite groups. As the group grew to include two of his ex-bandmates, the number of fans in the band began to outnumber original members.

"I was really flattered when I was asked to join. This is the first time I've played and toured with a band whose music I would actually want to listen to in my spare time, so it's pretty exciting."

**WHILE BECOMING** increasingly associated with LA art/music space the Smell, and the surrounding scene that spawned No Age and HEALTH, among others, Cooper is quick to dismiss the images of summer-camp camaraderie that may be forming in the mind.

"The Smell is a cool DIY and all-ages space in LA that gives younger bands the platform to make music and have an audience. It was good

for our band, as we were able to work through different phases and sounds and changes there without dealing with crazy fans or promoters or security. Some really good bands came out of there, but there are all these misconceptions—people make it sound like we sleep in bunk beds together and live there as some kind of commune, climbing ropes together and shit."

With a laugh, Cooper begins to wonder if the interview is coming off as too negative. Looking for a lighter note to end on, he brings up the increase of DIY spaces popping up in their hometown.

"If anything positive came out of this whole LA-wave of bands and music, it's the promotion of a community-minded sensibility, and people have followed in those footsteps to create and open more venues and spaces with a DIY mindset, which is great." ▼



## MUSIC WEEKLY

FOR YOUR FREE LISTINGS TO 780.426.2439  
OR E-MAIL GLENYS AT  
LISTINGS@VUEWEEKLY.COM  
DEADLINE IS FRIDAY AT 3 PM

THU  
LIVE MUSIC

**BLUES ON WHYTE** Thursdays  
**CHRISTOPHER'S PARTY PUB**  
stage hosted by Alberto Lruide, 6-10pm

**DRUID** Guitar heroes

**DUSTER'S PUB** Thursdays open stage hosted by the Mary Thomas 8pm-10pm

**DVS** Open mic Thursdays

**ECO CAFÉ-VILLAGE AT PIGEON LAKE** Open Mic Nights 1st and 3rd Thu every month, 6:30-8:30pm, open mic@deadmansdog.com

**HAVEN SOCIAL CLUB** Open jam 8pm-10pm

**HULBERT'S** Christopher Ford, 8pm, \$10 (door)

**JAMMERS PUB** Thursday open jam 7-11pm

**J AND R BAR AND GRILL** Stage Thursdays with the Foster Boys (10-11:30pm) 8-10pm 12-1pm

**LB'S PUB** Open jam with Ken Skoreyko, 9pm

**LIVE WIRE BAR AND GRILL** Stage Thursdays with Gary Thomas

**NEW CITY LUNAR LOUNGE** DJs, DJ Cadence Weapon, 8-11pm

**NORTH GLENORA HALL** Wild Rose Old Time Fiddlers

**RIVER CREE** Escape (Journey tribute)

**STARBUCKS** Sean Jones (rock/pop), 8pm, \$17.50 at TicketMaster, unionevents.com

**WILD WEST SALOON** Connection, Pre/Post, Allstar Quorum

**YARD BIRD SUITE** Wild Rose Old Time Fiddlers

**DJS**

**BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE** Escapade Entertainment

**BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE** Big Rock Thursdays. DJs spin on three levels

**BUDDY'S** Wet underwear contest with Mia Fellow, midnight, DJ West Coast Baby/Daddy

**FILTHY MCNASTY'S** Bingo with DJ S W A G

**FLUID LOUNGE** Girls Night out

**FUNKY BUDDHA (WHYTE AVE)** Requests with DJ Damian

**GAS PUMP** Ladies Nite: Top 40/dance with DJ Christian

**GINGUR SKY** Thursdays

**HALO** Thursdays Fo Sho with Allout DJs DJ Degree, Junior Brown

**KAS BAR** Urban House with DJ Mark Stevens, 9pm

**LEVEL 2 LOUNGE** Dish Thursdays funky house/techno with DJ Colin Hargreaves, house/breaks with DJ Krazy K, hardstyle/techno with DJ Decha, tech trance/electro with DJ Savage Garret; no minors; no cover

**NEW CITY SUBURBS** Bingo at 9:30pm followed by Electroshock Therapy with Dervish Naz Nomad and Plan B (electro, retro)

**ON THE ROCKS** Thursdays Dance lessons at 8pm, 8-10pm

**OVERTIME SOUTH** Retro to New classic rock, R&B, urban and dance with DJ Mikee, 9pm-2am, no cover

**PLANET INDIGO-ST. ALBERT** Hit It Thursdays: breaks, electro house spun with PI residents

**RENDEZVOUS PUB** Metal Thursday with org66

**STARDUST** Techno Hippy Crew Bassnectar, Kush Arora, Shamik and guests, 8pm

**TEMPLE** Tainted Thursdays: Electro Pop, Indie Rock and Roll

**WILD WEST SALOON** Connection, Pre/Post, Allstar Quorum

**YARD BIRD SUITE** Wild Rose Old Time Fiddlers

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(pop/rock)

**CENTURY CASINO** (rock/pop), 7pm, \$39.95/\$49.95 at TicketMaster

**COAST TO COAST** Open Stage every Friday night with host Leona Burkey at 9pm

**DVS TAVERN** Live music every Fri, 9pm-5

**EDDIE SHORTS** Natural Consequences featuring Rob Suter (blues)

**FESTIVAL PLACE** Borderlanders (singer-songwriters), Gretchen Peters, Sylvia Tyson, Ron Hynes, and Graham Isaacson, 7:30pm, \$30-\$36 at Festival Place box office

**FIDDLER'S ROOST** Brian Gregg creative commons release party, Harry and Moses Gregg with Dale Ladouceur, Haley Myrol, Bill Hobson, and Scott Cook and the Long Weekends 7:30pm (door), 8pm (video shoot), \$12 (adv) at TIX on the Square/\$15 (door)

**FRESH START CAFE** Fridays: Maynard Kolosog & Hugh Read, 6-9pm, \$5

**HAVEN SOCIAL CLUB** Red Shaq with Fat Dave, 8pm

**HYDEAWAY** All ages art space, Ursula Miner (CD release), Newborn Ghosts Litwise Vultures

**HULBERT'S** Lisa Nicole Grace, 8pm, \$10 (door)

**IRISH CLUB** Jam session; 8pm, no cover

**IVORY CLUB** Dueling piano show with Jesse, Shane, Tiffany and Erik and guests

**JEFFREY'S** June Mann Quartet (70s pop and jazz), \$10

**JEKYLL AND HYDE (PUB)** Every Friday: Headwind (classic pop/rock), 9pm, no cover

**JET NIGHTCLUB**

**MEAD HALL** Battle Of The Bands Stormchaser, Guardians Of Power, The Eternal Ance, First Church Of Mud

**MYER HOROWITZ THEATRE** Jaydee Bixby, 7:30pm; \$25 at TicketMaster

**NEW CITY LUNAR LOUNGE** Eve Hall, Razors, Preying Saints, no minors, by donation

**ON THE ROCKS**

**PALACE CASINO (WEM)** Rule of

**PAWN SHOP** Monthly Greater Than Giants, Good Things, guests, 9pm, \$5

**RIVER CREE** Escape (Journey tribute)

**STARBUCKS**

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**RUNRAISER** with Destruction United Assassins of Youth, Dean Lonsdale, 9pm (door), \$20 (adv)

**STEEPS OLD GLENORA** Carty Fisher (folk/blues/acoustic); 8:30pm

**TEMPLE** Age of Aquarius II with Ill

**TOUCH OF CLASS** Dwayne Cannan (blues, 50s/60s, roots, originals) 8:30-10:30pm

**URBAN LOUNGE** Mourning Wood

**WILD WEST SALOON** Kory Wilos

**X-WRECKS** Allan-Lee Ropchen and the Blues Busters; 8-12

**YARD BIRD SUITE** Fernanda Cunha 8pm (door), 9pm (show); \$20 (member/\$24 (guest)) at TicketMaster

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**NEWCASTLE PUB** Fridays House dance mix with DJ Donovan

**NEW CITY LUNAR LOUNGE** DJ Anarchy Adam (Punk)

**OVERTIME BOILER AND TAP-ROOM SOUTH** Retro to New classic rock, R&B, urban and dance with DJ Mikee; 9pm-2am, no cover

**PLAY NIGHTCLUB** The first bar for the queer community to open in a decade with DJ's Alex Brown and Eddie Toonflash, 9pm (door), \$2 www.playnightclub.ca

**RED STAR** Movin' on Up Fridays, indie, rock, funk, soul, hip hop with DJ Gatto, DJ Mega Wattson

**ROUGE LOUNGE** Solice Friday

**SPORTSWORLD INLINE AND ROLLER SKATING DISCO** Top 40 Request with a mix of Retro and Disco, 7-10:30pm, www.sportsworld.ca

**STOLLS** Top 40, R&B, house with People's DJ

**STONEHOUSE PUB** Top 40 with D. Tysn

**SUEDE LOUNGE** DJ Nic E Remixed every Friday

**TEMPLE TGI** Psydubs, 9pm

**WUNDERBAR** Fridays with the Pon. Girls, DJ Avinder and DJ Torna no cover

**Y AFTERHOURS** Foundation Friday

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# Rock-a-bye baby

## MUSIC ENTER SANDOR

STEVEN SANDOR  
sander@vuwweekly.com

My wife has just returned to work after a year of maternity leave; luckily, our work schedules allow us to successfully juggle the care of our son; she works in the mornings, and I don't have to be in at my office until mid-afternoon.

So, during the work week, from the time I get up until early afternoon I am in charge of our little man.

Already, I am using music to soothe the savage beast. We knew from a young age that Tate enjoyed music. Now that he's crawling around, the stereo has become one of his favourite distractions. All those knobs, lights and buttons—and music comes out of the big boxes on the sides!

Since I don't have time to keep running back and forth to flip CDs—and, to my son, flipping on the Mac and running iTunes doesn't have the same sense of wonder as the big, black stereo—I am quickly finding out which albums are best for kids to hear.

My wife and I tried out those lullaby collections you'll find in all the baby shops aimed at hipster parents. These discs feature punk and metal songs in lullaby format—think Nirvana and Ramones played on music boxes. Not only are the songs almost unrecognizable in the style that they're covered, they

don't really engage our child. Maybe because we started taking him to shows months ago, he expects to hear more than simple tinkles.

So, what does work? As much as I'd like to announce to the world that I serve my son purée strawberries and rice cereal to Slayer's *Seasons in the Abyss* or Wolf Eyes' *Slicer*, as a parent I'm not quite ready to introduce my one-year-old to speed metal or experimental noise rock.

But what does work? Here are some discs that make my son bob up and down with excitement, or help him fall asleep. Real music, not lullaby covers.

Almost anything by the Flaming Lips works. Really, when you think about it, if you perused Wayne Coyne's lyrics, you might actually think he was in Raffi's trade. Songs about fruit, jam, robots, talking animals—and, if you've ever seen the band live, with members wearing animal suits and roadies in superhero garb, it only furthers the idea that the Lips make children's music for adults. So why not let the kids enjoy it? Tate screams with delight and smiles pretty well all the way through the heavy synths of *Yoshimi Battles the Pink Robots*.

For straight lullabies, you can't beat Björk. The atmospheric, ethereal *Homogenic* album or the sampled and resequenced vocals of *Medúlla* are like sleeping pills for the boy. I have seen Björk, too, and with all of her colourful costumes and get-ups, well, she could easily do a tour of mom-and-stroller mati-

nee shows.

Kraftwerk, *The Man-Machine*. Klings and klangs and robot noises. What is there for a kid not to love? "Spacelab," is another surefire lullaby for Tate.

Anything by Bob Marley. Just the pure joy that comes across in the music makes it totally appropriate for children.

Ladytron. Tate saw Ladytron with us, and he enjoyed it. So, go ahead.

This is what makes dad proud: he's yet to complain when we toss on Joy Division. Maybe it's the high-pitched bass, the primal rhythms, but the louder and faster the song, the better he seems to like it. So far, he's always smiled when "Warsaw," one of the band's most passionate, frenetic songs, comes on.

Now, it wouldn't be fair to write this column without mentioning something that my son has indicated that he's hated. Now, I consider this an all-time classic, but this album made him cry. Then he stopped crying when I hit the pause button on the CD player. Then I tried it again, and the "no, no, no" shaking of the head resumed and the tears flowed. So, out came the CD. And that was the Beastie Boys' *Paul's Boutique*. So, classic hip hop is not in my son's preferred music mix. Maybe we'll try it again when he's older, when he can tell me that all my old-fogey hippie music sucks. ▽

Steven Sandor is a former editor-in-chief of *Vue Weekly*, now an editor and author living in Toronto.

### EARLY STAGE SALOON-STONY PLAIN Saturday Live Music

**EDIE SHORTS** Natural Consequences featuring Rob Suter (blues)

**EDMONTON EVENT CENTRE** Cradle of Filth, Satyricon, Septic Flesh, all ages event, 7pm (door), \$10-\$15 at TicketMaster, Blackbird, Mezzanine, and Unionevents.com

**ROCKS** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

**HILLTOP PUB** Open Stage/mic hosted by Sally's Krackers, 3pm

**HULBERT'S** Drew Malcolm and Lindsay Walker (CD release party), 8pm, \$10 (door)

**HYDRAWAY** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

**IVORY CLUB** Dueling piano show with Jesse, Shane, Tiffany and Erik and guests

**JAMMERS PUB** Saturday open jam, 3-7:30pm, country/rock band, 3pm-2am

**JAMMERS PUB** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

**JEFFREY'S** Rollanda Lee (jazz class), 8pm

**GRAND AND HTD PUB** Classic pop/rock, 9pm, no cover

**13th HIGHWAY** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

**WINDMILL & TEX GARD** Open stage hosted by Dr. Oude, 7-10pm

**MYER HOROWITZ THEATRE** Jeremy Fisher, Hannah Georgas (country/folk), 8pm, \$15 at TicketMaster

**NEW CITY LIXVID LOUNGE** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

**OSTYNE'S** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

**ON THE ROCKS** Exit 303 with DJ Wil

**PALACE CASINO (WEM)** Rule of 1/2

**ROCK SHOW** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

**RENDZVOUS PUB** Polar, Stone Arrow, Eucopa

**ROYAL ALBERTA MUSEUM**

### Northern Lights Folk Club

Martyn Joseph, 7pm (door), 8pm, \$25 (adv) at TIX on the Square. Acoustic

**STARLITE ROOM** Local Showcase Rattlesnake Romeo, Freeburn, Noweiser, 9pm (door), \$10 (door)

**TOUCH OF CLASS-CHATEAU LOUIS** Dwayne Cannon (blues, 50s/60s, roots, originals) 8:30-12:30am

**URBAN LOUNGE** Mourning Wood

**WILD WEST SALOON** Kory Wlos

**YARDBIRD SUITE** Ted's Warren Commission, 8pm (door), 9pm (show), \$14 (member)/\$18 (guest) at TicketMaster

### CLASSICAL

**WINDSPEAR CENTRE** Landmarks Masters Keyboard Masterpieces, Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, Maximiano Valdés (conductor), Sara Davis Buechner (piano), 8pm, Symphony Prelude: 7:15pm, Upper Circle (Third Level) Lobby

### DJS

**BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE** Saturday DJs on three levels. Main Floor

**BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

**EMERALD PUB** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

**ESMERALDA'S** Super Parties: Every Sat a different theme

**FLUID LOUNGE** Saturdays Gone Gold Mash-Up with Hamen B and DJ Kwake

**FUNKY BUDDHA (WHYTE AVE)** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

**GINGERBREAD** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

**HALO** For those who know, those who don't, 8pm, DJ Junior Brown, Luke Morrison, Nestor Delano, An Rhodes

**LEVEL 2 LOUNGE** Sizzle Saturday (DJ Showcase) 8pm-12am

**NEWCASTLE PUB** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

**NEW CITY LIXVID LOUNGE** Rawk Saturdays with Todd and Alex

**NEWCASTLE PUB** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

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### NEW CITY SUBURBS

Suck with Greg Gory and BlueJay

**PLANET INDIGO-JASPER AVENUE** Suggestive Saturdays, breaks electro house with PI residents

**RED STAR** Saturdays indie rock, hip hop, and electro with DJ Hot Philly and guests

**RENDZVOUS** Survival metal night

**SPORTSWORLD** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

**STOLLS ON WHYTE** Top 40, R&B, house with People's DJ

**SUN** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

**TEMPLE** Oh Snap!, Every Saturday, Cobra Commander and guests, 9pm

**WUNDERBAR** Featured DJ and local bands

**Y AFTERHOURS** Release Saturday

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### ON THE ROCKS

Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

**ON THE ROCKS** Shocker Sundays with King Muskala

**SECOND CUP-MOUNTAIN EQUIPMENT CO-OP** Donna Durand (roots, indie, folk), 2-4pm

**SHAW CUPPERNET CENTRE** Michael W. Smith (Christian singer/songwriter)

### CLASSICAL

**ARLEN** 2006 Honors Laureate Hong Xu (piano), hosted by Katherine Duncan, 11am and 8pm, \$50 at Arden box office

**CONVOCATION HALL** Strings, Academy Winds and Percussion, Tanya Prochazka (conductor), 8pm, \$15 (adult)/\$10 (senior/student) at TIX on the Square

**WINDSPEAR CENTRE** Landmarks Masters Keyboard Masterpieces, Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, Maximiano Valdés (conductor), Sara Davis Buechner (piano), 2pm

### DJS

**BACKSTAGE TAP AND GRILL** Industry Night with Atomic Improv, Jamecki and DJ Tim

**BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

**BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

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## MON LIVE MUSIC

**BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE** Mondays live music monthly, no cover, Dub Vulture, no cover

**BLUES ON WHYTE** Mississippi Heat

**BUDDY'S NIGHTCLUB** Open mic jam with Ladykillers, guests, 8pm

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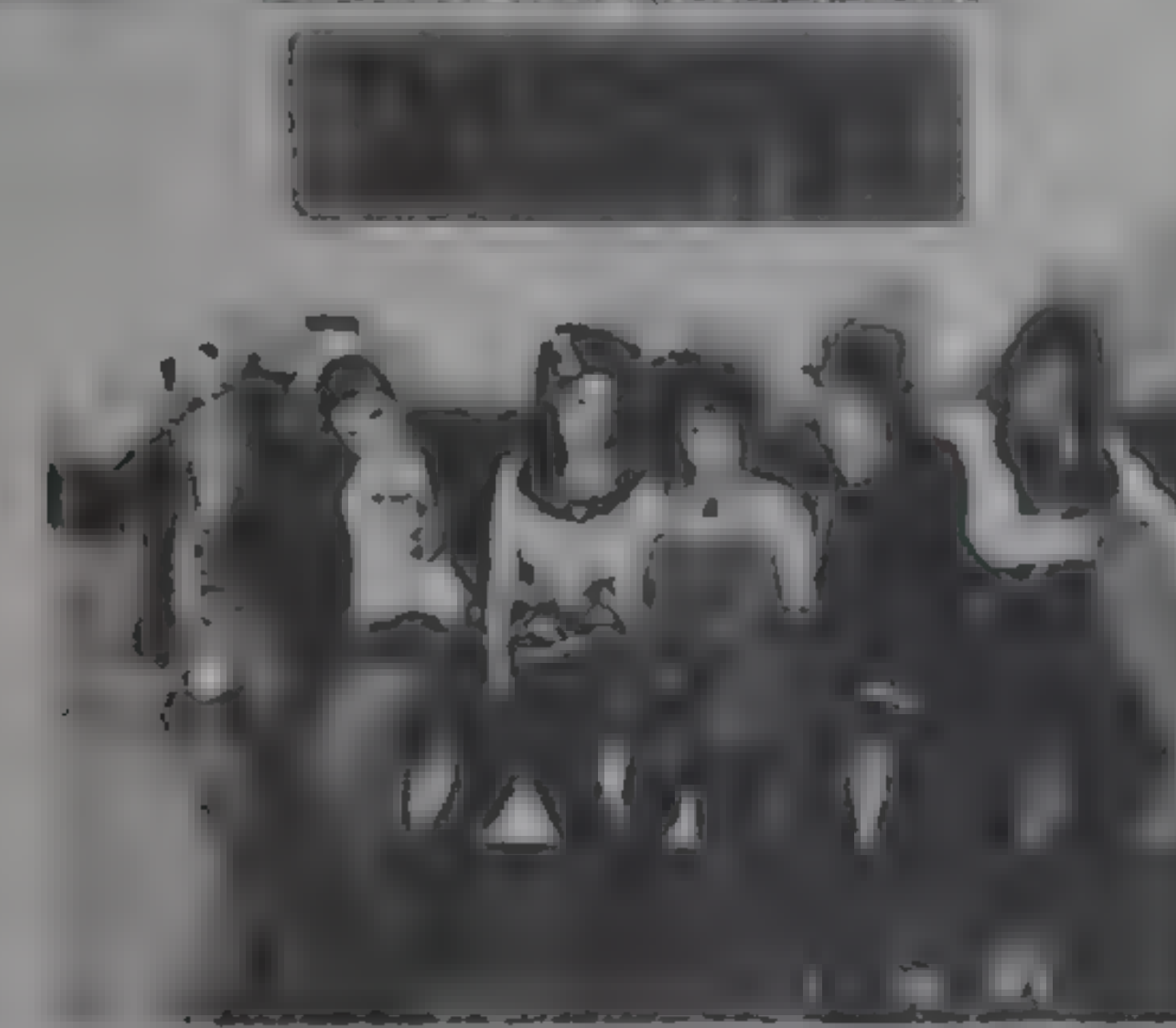
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# The great electro swindle

Electronic music comes of age on camera

**MUSIC** **BACKLASH BLUES**  
ROLAND PAVERTON  
roland@vnuweekly.com

The concept of purity of form in DJing is now perceived as rigid and contrarian to the prevailing party rulebook. Alexander Technique's DJs Are Not Rockstars is a promotions company and weekly club night based in New York. I remember meeting Alex in Spain last year and hearing him explain his brand, and I was interested in the validity of the statement. More and more, it seems like his purist viewpoint isn't really held by many other people in the community. Be it through crowd-surfing "celebrity DJs" like Steve Aoki or the general booze-swilling, hard living ethos of rough-edged electro spinners of all levels of notoriety, it seems like no one is willing to play the background. This schism is presented by two concurrently released tour documentaries about the international disc jockey lifestyle.

The meteoric rise of France's Justice more than justifies the need for a month-in-the-life video journal and *A Cross The Universe* (a pun on the use of the cross as a symbol and title for Justice's debut

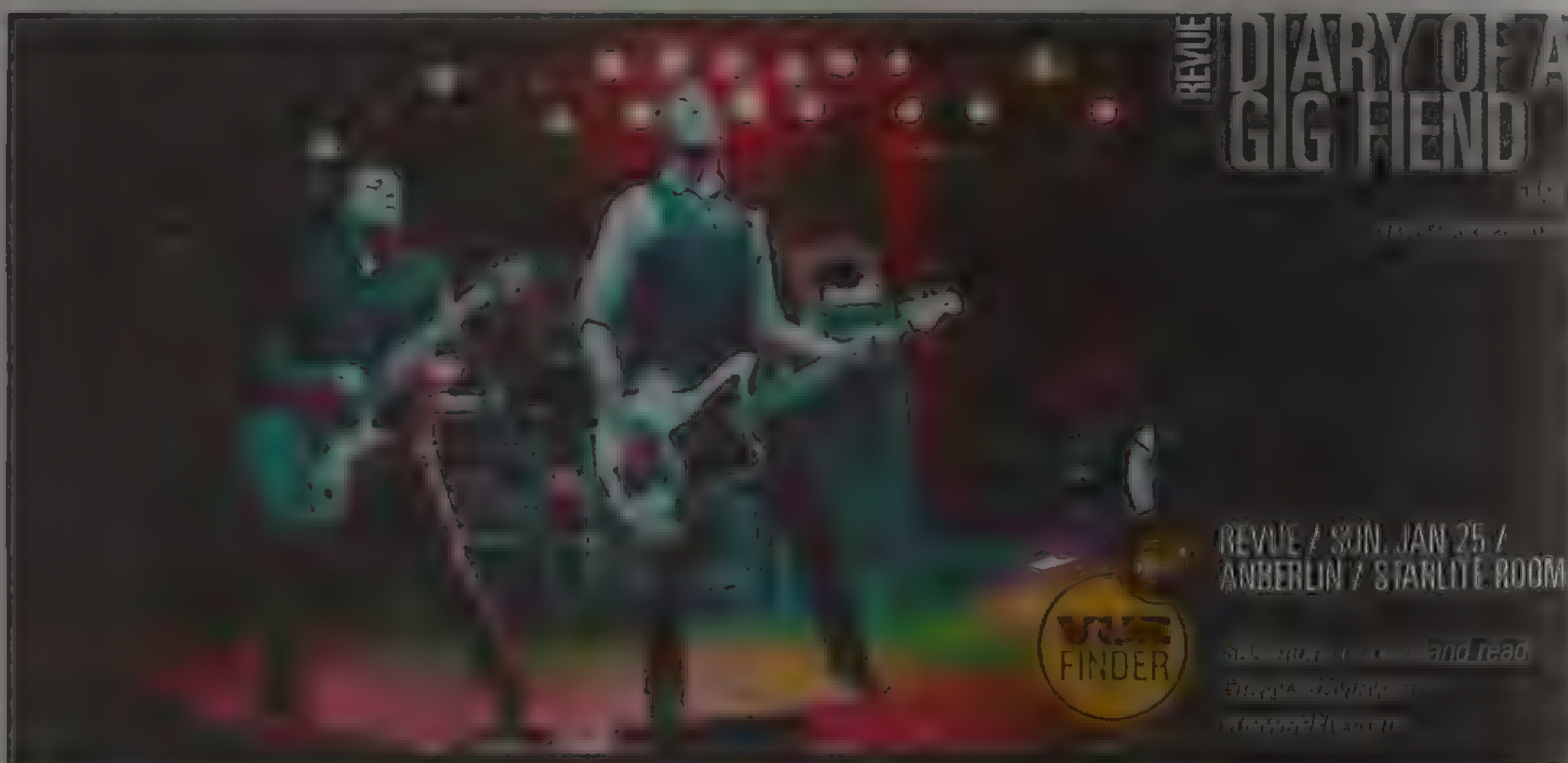
album) satisfies that desire. Still, this documentary somehow actually limits the musical perspective. I see the boys on stage, I see massive crowds throbbing and achieving transcendence but I leave the film with no better understanding of their creative process or the dynamics of their live show. This is especially interesting in light of a recent controversy stemming from a photo of them performing with their MIDI controller visibly unplugged. Maybe they just don't want to reveal the magician's secrets. Or perhaps this goes hand in hand with the movie's portrayal of Justice and their show as a portal into hedonism?

Is it more about the experience and the atmosphere? Justice bound around like loveable goofballs throughout the film but like their music, there is always a dark edge threatening to burst onto the surface. Xavier de Rosnay defends himself against a high, aggressive fan by smashing a bottle over his head, leaving him with a bloody hand before a show. He proceeds to do his thing (whatever that is) on stage, and afterwards the band is promptly arrested. This is just a tip of the iceberg. The danger seems to be paramount with Justice. They live an unhinged lifestyle, but on film, it occa-

sionally comes across as transparent

**MAYBE IT HAS** to do with their age. Old goats by comparison, the Dewaele brothers (better known as 2 Many DJs and Soulwax) are world-renowned DJs and producers from Belgium. *Part of the Weekend Never Dies* is a far more traditional look at the touring lifestyle, presenting the rigorous schedule and surreal displays of excess more evenly than Justice's picture. Outside of the exciting and frantically edited performance scenes, the focus seems to be on their collaborators and their legacy. The best parts of the film involve the perception of them held by their famous friends, from Tiga's convoluted sausage metaphor to the familial reverence of LCD Soundsystem's James Murphy.

Like it or not, theatre is an important aspect of rock 'n' roll. It would've never made it to the bedroom walls of so many impressionable young people if it didn't present a tangible, acceptable escape from the benign pressures of the outside world. If DJs are rock stars, then I guess there has to be as much variation from Justice to Soulwax as there is between the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. It would make things much less interesting to close electronic music off just when it's coming of age. **V**



## TUE LIVE MUSIC

**BLUES ON WHITE** Jam with Alicia Fall and Ruckey Sidecar, 8pm

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**REX PUB** Tuesday open stage every Tuesday night, 9pm-1am, featuring guests Zeek Ammar, hosted by Mark Ammar and Noel (Big Cat) Mackenzie featuring Yuji-Hara and John Mackenzie-Yui

**DEYBEE'S** Open mic every Tue 8-10pm

**SECOND CUP** SHANLEY MULLER LIBRARY Open mic every Tue 8-10pm

## DJS

**BLACK DOG FRESHHOUSE** Main floor CJS's Eddie Lunchpail Wooftop Dub at The Dog with DJ Fudge

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**SECOND CUP** SHANLEY MULLER LIBRARY Open mic every Tue 8-10pm

## WED LIVE MUSIC

**BLACK DOG FRESHHOUSE** Main floor CJS's Eddie Lunchpail Wooftop Dub at The Dog with DJ Fudge

**ESMERALDA'S** Retro every Tue, no cover, 8-10pm

**REX PUB** Tuesday open stage every Tuesday night, 9pm-1am, featuring guests Zeek Ammar, hosted by Mark Ammar and Noel (Big Cat) Mackenzie featuring Yuji-Hara and John Mackenzie-Yui

**DEYBEE'S** Open mic every Tue 8-10pm

**SECOND CUP** SHANLEY MULLER LIBRARY Open mic every Tue 8-10pm

## CLASSICAL

**CONVOCAATION HALL** Graduate Recital Choir, Elaine Voors-Meyre (Master of Music, choral conducting)

**DEYBEE'S** Open mic every Tue 8-10pm

**SECOND CUP** SHANLEY MULLER LIBRARY Open mic every Tue 8-10pm

## DJS

**BANK ULTRA LOUNGE** Wednesday Nights with DJ Harley

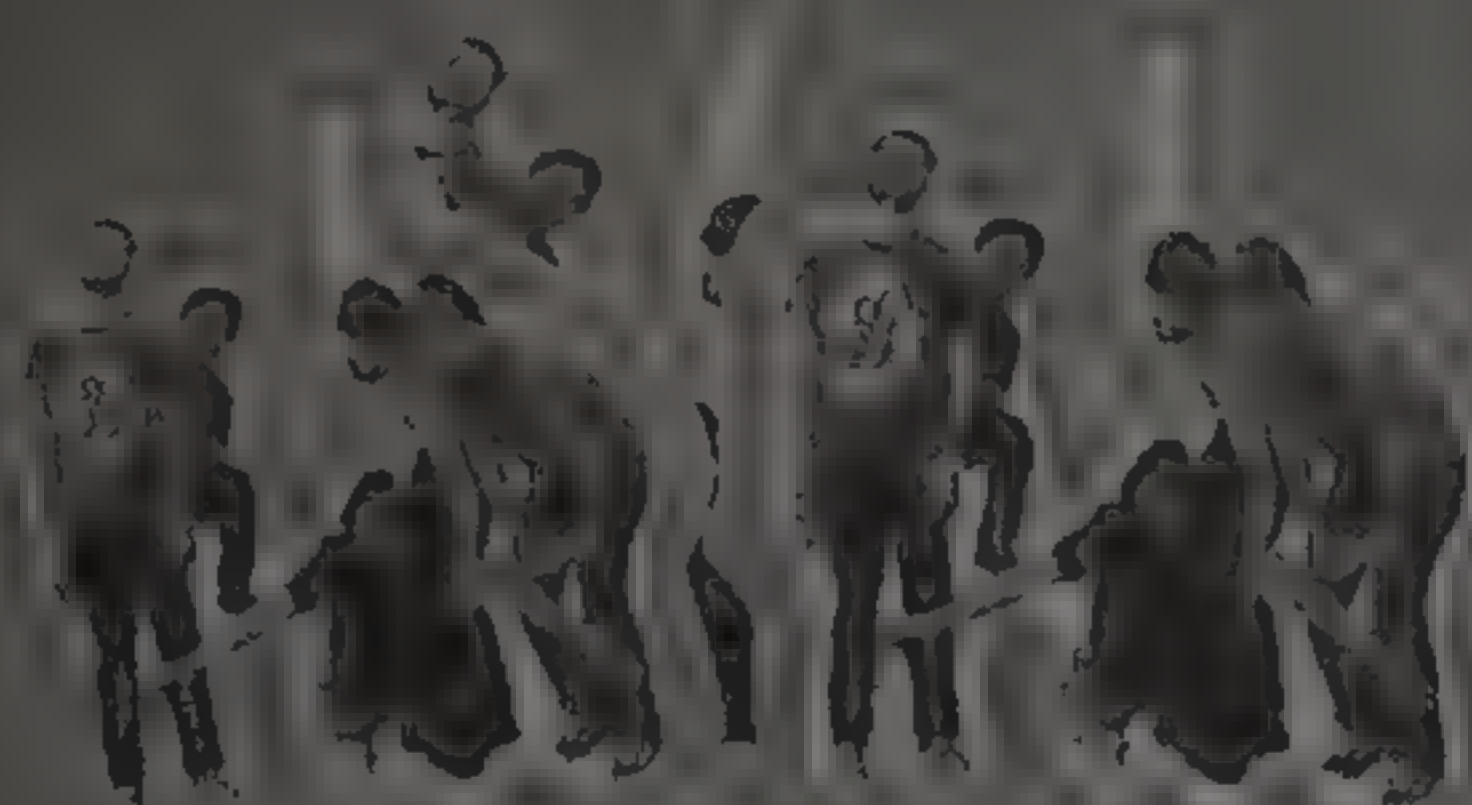
**SHANLEY MULLER LIBRARY** Open mic every Tue 8-10pm

**SECOND CUP** SHANLEY MULLER LIBRARY Open mic every Tue 8-10pm



SAT JAN 31 → PAWN SHOP YOSADA ARTISTS FROM L.A.

## THE MAE SHI



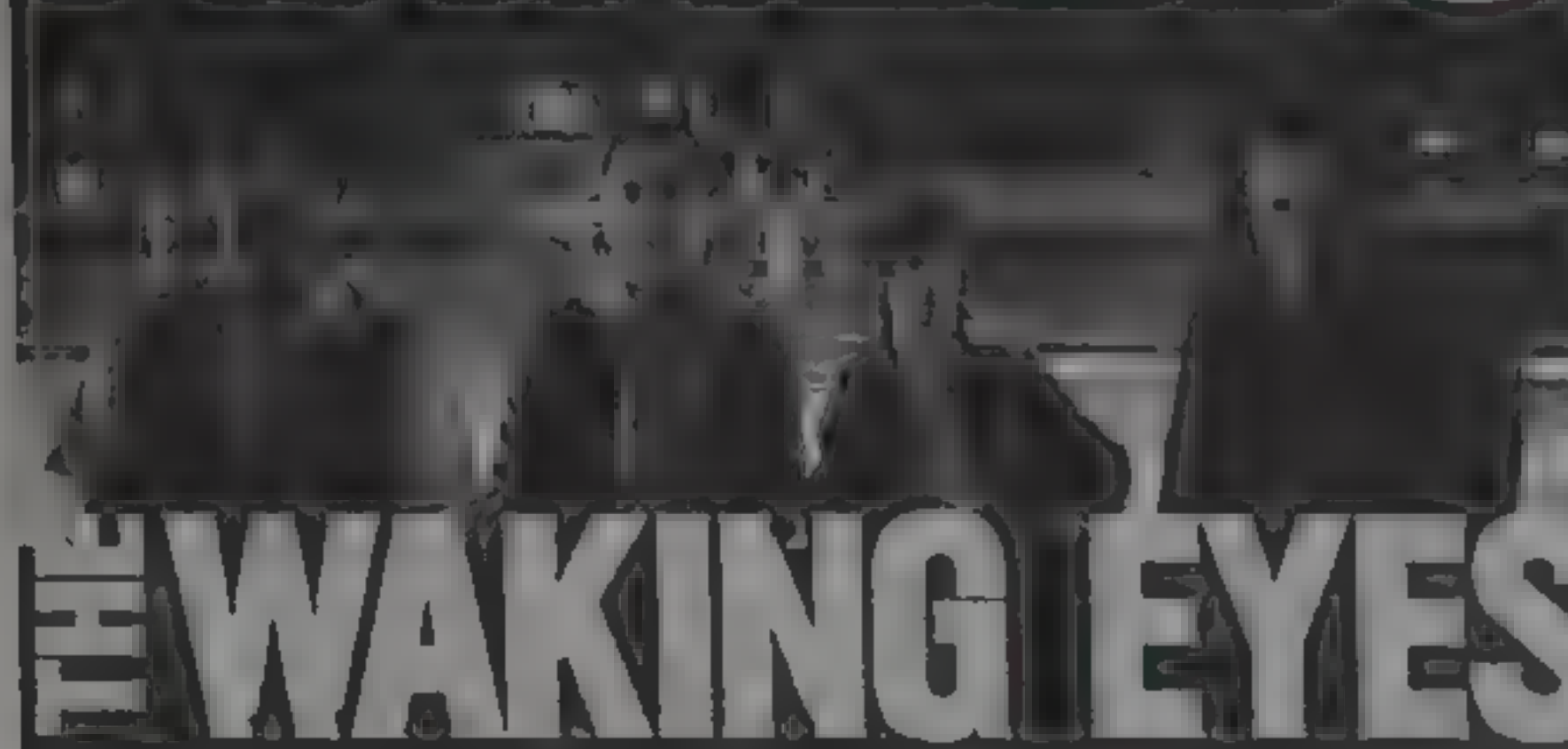
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JANUARY 31 THE PAWN SHOP

SAT FEB 21 → STARLITE SONIC 102.9 PRESENTS...



## ARKELLS



## THE WAKING EYES

SAT MARCH 14 → STARLITE

## KNAAN

PLUS GUESTS



FRI FEB 6 → PAWN SHOP EAST COAST MUSIC STARS FROM HALIFAX...

## TOM FUN ORCHESTRA

WITH GUESTS FROM VICTORIA  
JON AND ROY

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THUR FEB 19 → STARLITE



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## ASH GRUNWALD

FRI FEB 20 → THE HYDEAWAY

## LIBRARY VOICES

THE EMERSON LETTERS  
AND KISSES OF FIRE

SAT FEB 21 → PAWN SHOP

## DD/MM/YYYY

## SYLVIE

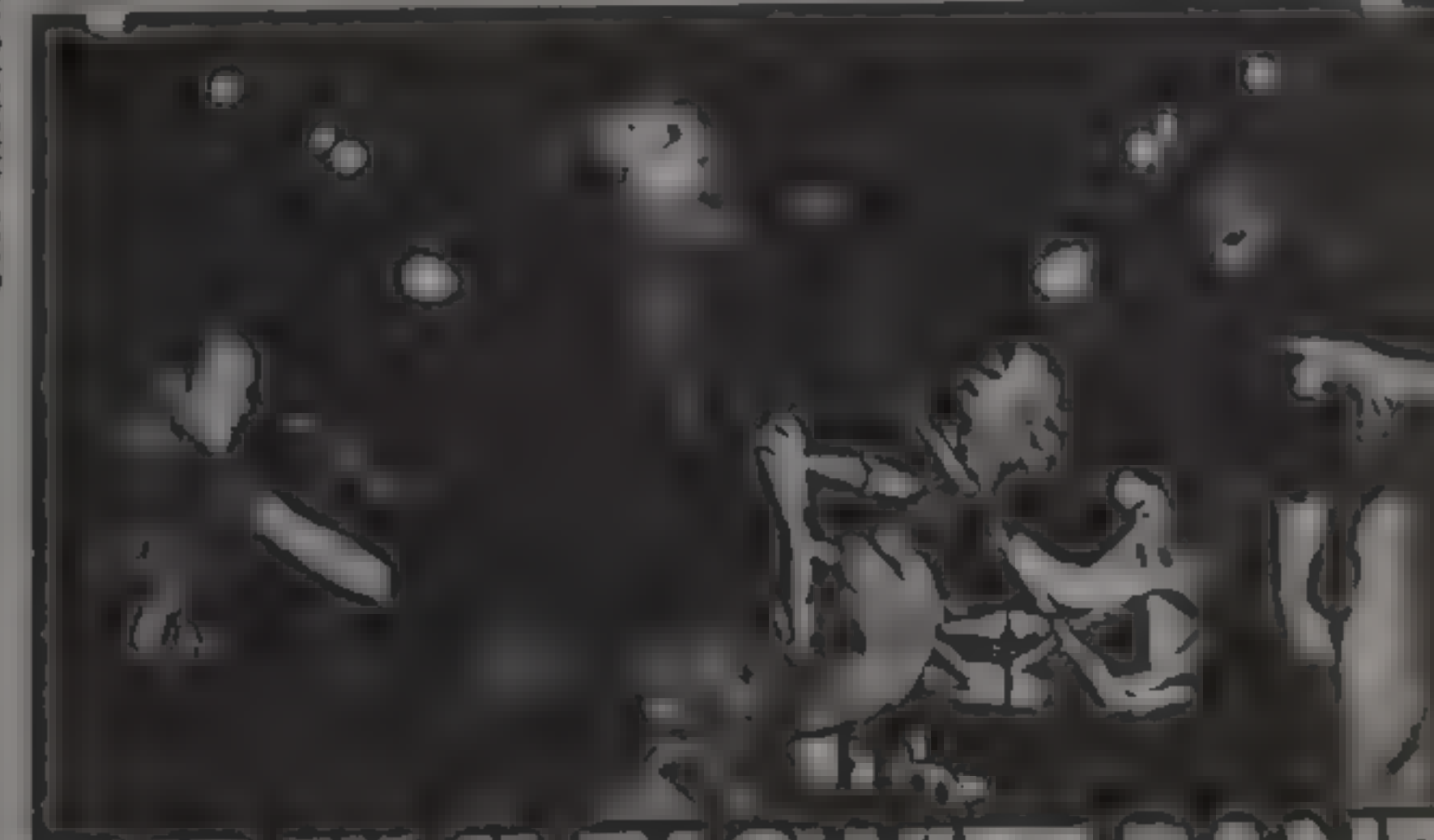
SUN FEB 22 → STARLITE SONIC 102.9 PRESENTS...



## BEAST

KIDZ HAVING FUN AND JOUST

SAT MARCH 7 → STARLITE NETWORK ARTISTS FROM HALIFAX...



## THE JIMMY SWIFT BAND

PLUS GUESTS THE SOULICITORS

FRI MARCH 13 → HAVEN SOCIAL CLUB

## ROMI MAYES

MON MARCH 23 → McDUGALL UNITED



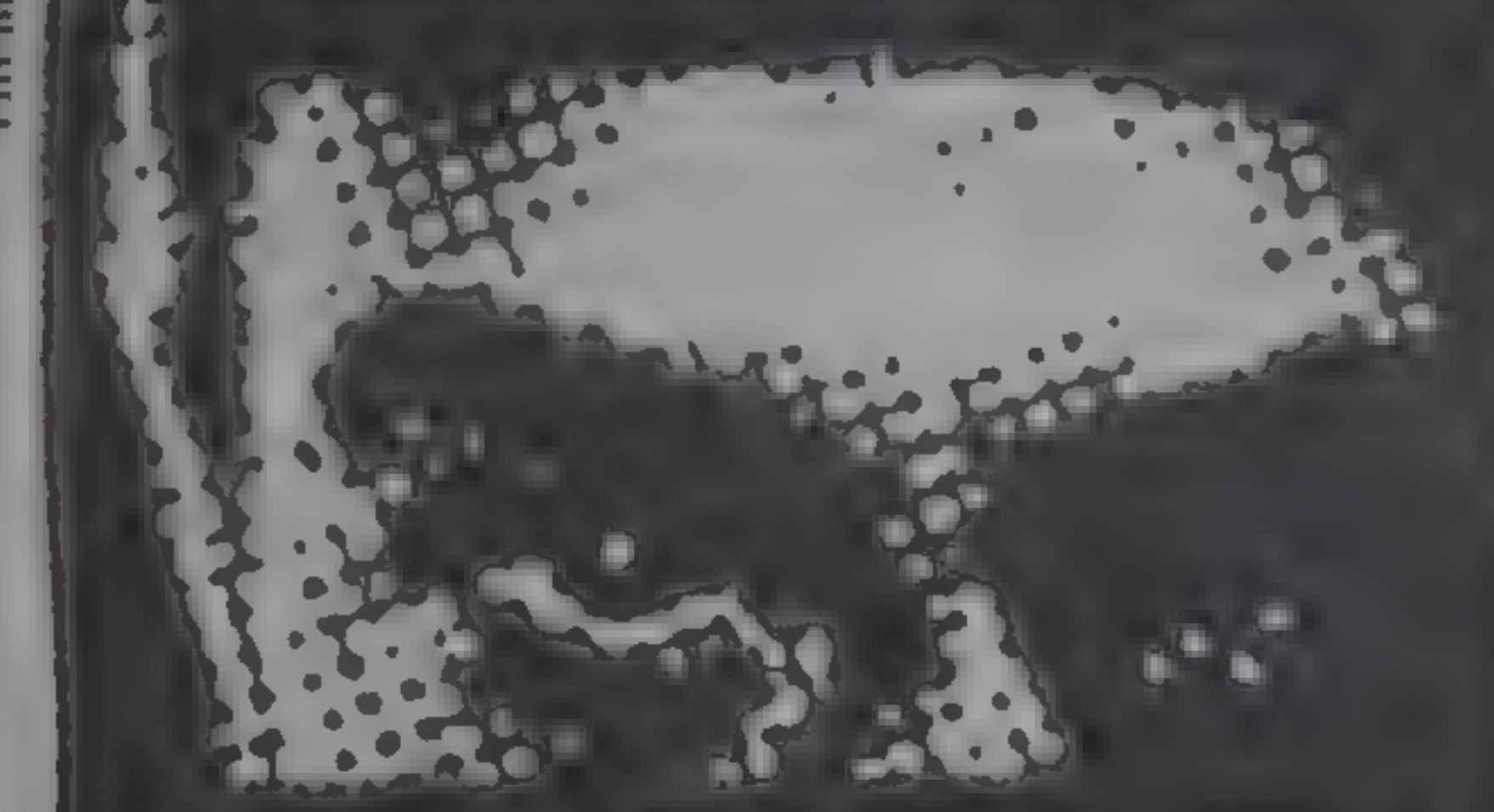
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PLUS GUESTS  
PILLARS & TONGUES

FRI MARCH 27 → STARLITE

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FRI MARCH 27 → McDUGALL UNITED

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PLUS KATE MAKI / TIX AT TICKETMASTER, BLACKBYRD & LISTEN

SAT MAR 28 → PAWN SHOP OUTSIDE MUSIC ARTISTS FROM TORONTO...

## HYLOZOISTS

FRI APRIL 3 → PAWN SHOP BLACK HEN ARTISTS FROM SASKATOON...

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PLUS GUESTS THE WHEAT POOL

APRIL 6 → PAWN SHOP SKINGRAFT ARTISTS FROM MONTREAL...

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## Come to save the day

Mr Trouble never hangs around when he hears Mighty Popo's sound

CAROLYN NIKODYM / carolyn@vueweekly.com

Although music is one of the most common art forms, it is also one of the most mysterious. Somehow it has the ability to affect mood and physical well-being. Even those who have spent hours studying its effects can't seem to explain it. But you don't really need any letters behind your name to realize that you turn to certain songs to make you feel better or to let off some steam.

Jacques "Popo" Murigande, leader of Juno Award-winning **Mighty**

PREVIEW

FRI, JAN 30 (7:30 PM)  
**MIGHTY POPO**  
ARDEN THEATRE, ST ALBERT, \$28

**Popo**, writes music with this effect in mind. Born in a Burundian refugee community to Rwandan parents, Murigande prefers to focus on the healing properties of music and on the beauty of his native land.

"It depends what you have in mind when you are writing music. Healing

is exactly what I have in mind when I am writing music. It's healing and being beneficial to others in a good way. It's planting a tree and just giving it some good food, and you just keep watering that tree. It's going to grow if it's in a fertile land," he says. "So I really write music with that purpose in mind, and just hoping that it's going to do the same thing for people as it does for me. If one person feels that, I'm the happiest man on Earth."

As any art lover or maker knows, however, music isn't the only craft that can form a balm. And when the opportunity arose for Murigande to participate in *Noah's Great Rainbow*, a play in Toronto that explores the multi-generational effects of genocide, it was the subject matter that attracted him.

Despite never having acted before, the Ottawa resident didn't contend with much stage fright.

"The stage was my comfort. In the rehearsal I had problems. I'm familiar being on stage; that was fine for me," he says. "Again, it's all a matter of rehearsing and being ready for whatever you're doing. Once you're ready, it all falls in the right place."

**WHEN YOU LISTEN** to **Mighty Popo**, it can seem that Murigande was born ready to perform. Western blues and jazz seamlessly fuse with reggae and the traditions of Rwanda and Burundi. But the sound comes from years of exploration of many influences.

"Someone like me always loves to listen to other people's music. I enjoy listening to other people's music," he explains. "The journey continues. Even though I found one thing, you know, the journey continues because I'm always exploring

"I know that writing my music in the way that I did on the last album, [*Muhazi*], it is definitely where I want to be," he adds. "But as an artist, you're always improving and exploring. Maybe in two years something else might pop up and be better than what I've done."

It's a journey that has led him to some interesting stages across the country, including Toronto's Live 8 in 2005 and a membership in African Guitar Summit. And with the hopeful arrival of another **Mighty Popo** album later this year, it's a journey we can continue with him. ▽

destruction based on our past," explains guitarist Steve Winjet, adding that when they're playing their music, they feel united in a common solution. Hence the basis for the name **Destruction United**.

"Because we've all made changes in our lives, moving away from destruction, we can put our efforts more into bringing light to the world instead of darkness," notes singer James Anthony. "Instead of feeding the negative, we bring awareness about positivity and change."

Winjet feels that society often ignores problems that need confrontation. This group's philosophy, on the other hand, is to face fears, both personal issues and music-related ones.

"We stand against our fears when we get onstage," Winjet says. "We stand against our fears when we come together and bring a song to the table."

"If I feel something doesn't work the way we're doing it, I need to speak up and say that," Anthony elaborates. "A lot of times people aren't willing to speak up and say these kinds of things, but it's through love and respect and common decency for each other that we have that working relationship. And it benefits our music." ▽

PREVIEW

FRI, JAN 30 (9 PM)  
1ST ANNUAL FUNDRAISER FOR THE MEMORIAL MARCH  
FOR THE MISSING AND MURDERED WOMEN OF EDMONTON  
**DESTRUCTION UNITED**  
WITH ASSASSINS OF YOUTH, DEAN LONSDALE  
STARLITE ROOM, \$20

MARIA KOTOVYCH / maria@vueweekly.com

When Danielle Boudreau's sister and two friends were murdered several years ago, she wanted to raise awareness about violence against women. She now organizes the Memorial March for the Missing and Murdered Women of Edmonton, which will occur on February 14.

**Destruction United**, a local metal group, will perform at this Friday's FUNraiser to raise money for the march. By participating, the band wants to bring awareness to darker areas that exist in society, hopefully decreasing their incidence.

From personal experience, the guys know about identifying problems in their own lives and doing something to change.

"On some level, all of us were on kinda a path of self-

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**CHRIS SMITHER**



FRIDAY FEBRUARY 27



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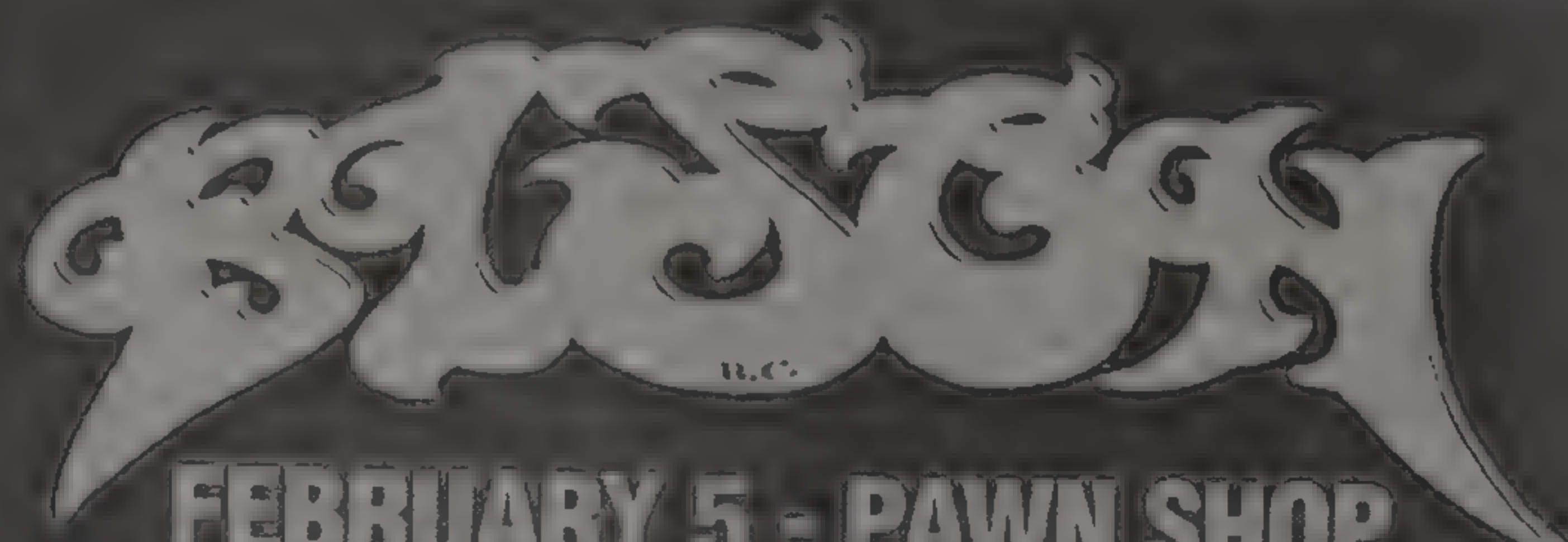
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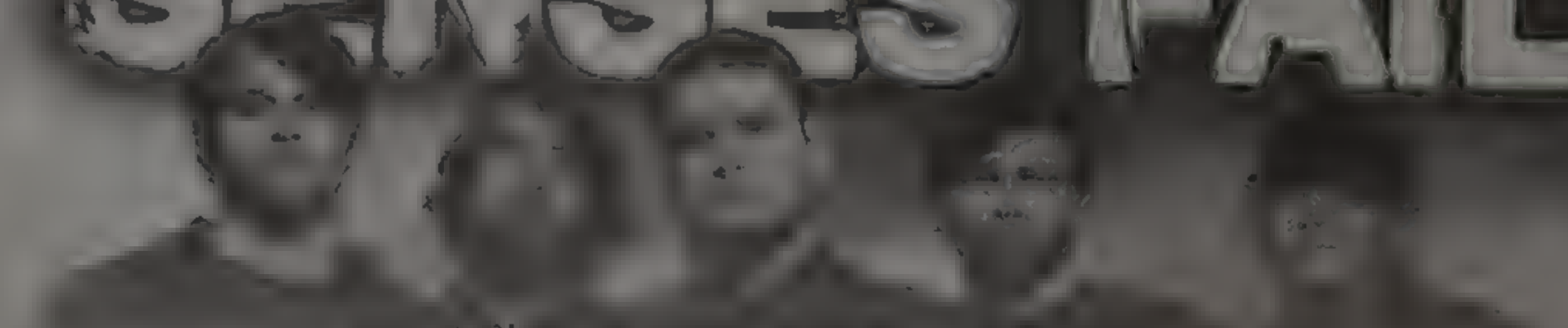
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## The secret of her success

BC songbird Hannah Georgas has *The Beat Stuff*

EDEN MUNRO / eden@vancouverweekly.com

**'M**y dad's very musical," Hannah Georgas recalls of her childhood introduction to music. "My dad used to play piano professionally, very into the boogie woogie, Spike Jones kind of style, and we used to dance around the piano—I have three sisters and we were crazy about dancing and rocking out with him. He inspired me quite a bit to learn the piano, too, and my mom basically forced me into piano lessons when I was about five, so that was the beginning of it all for me."

Those early years were spent growing up in Newmarket, Ontario, and the music that Georgas shared with her family led to her beginning to write her own songs. While the tunes and lyrics written when she was five-years-old were no doubt rudimentary in comparison to what she would do later on, the important thing for her was that the desire to create had been instilled in her, a feeling she wouldn't forget as she followed a winding path leading from the family living room to the stage.

"I would go to camp forever since I was a little girl—I didn't start playing guitar until high school, and then I started working up at lodges and doing camp stuff and bringing my guitar up, and then later on going to friend's cabins," she considers. "Music has been part of partying and hanging out and everything."

"It's such an intimate thing," she continues. "And for me to share music with people is the best thrill in life. Being on stage, being around a campfire, just being able to sing for people and jam with people, and [being around] people that also can play instruments and play for you and you can hear other people's stuff, it's just so inspiring."

**GEORGAS SET OUT** on her own five years ago with guitar in tow, moving to BC and landing first in

PREVIEW

SAT, JAN 31 (7 PM)  
**HANNAH GEORGAS**  
WITH JEREMY FISHER  
HORDWITZ THEATRE, \$15 (ALL AGES)

Victoria for a stint at university before moving on to Vancouver last year to make a go of music. She went to the big city with a demo and after putting it up on her MySpace page she heard from singularly named producer Winston.

A coffee meeting between Georgas and Winston led to a two-song demo, with one of those tracks going on to win 2008's Music BC Songbird West Singer/Songwriter Competition. Georgas then reconvened with her producer and an EP, *The Beat Stuff*, was completed.

While *The Beat Stuff* is just seeing release, Georgas is already thinking ahead to the next record, saying that she tends to write often, especially of late.

"I'll go through spurts where I can write two songs in a week," she admits. "This past year I've been pumping out a lot of songs. I love it. When that happens it's pretty awesome."

"I try to make sure that I at least document the song, too, because I'll just go through songs and be like, 'Oh, that song that I wrote a long time ago, I haven't pulled that out in a while,'" she adds. "I'm really trying to make a habit of recording everything that I do just so that I don't forget what I'm doing. I'm going to be making a full-length record in April and there is a collection of songs where some of them I've written during the time that I was doing the EP and some of them are really, really new. I'm just kind of compiling everything that I have and picking the best of what I have and what would work best together." ♥

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# Inspired by His noodly appendage

Pastafarian hoists the rag and sets sail with his family

JAMES STEWART / jstewart@vancouverweekly.com

Upset over the Kansas State Board of Education's decision to include intelligent design in the teaching of evolution, Bobby Henderson created the Flying Spaghetti Monster as an alternative explanation of creationism dubbed Pastafarianism. The movement spread quickly throughout the world, eventually catching the ear of local musician "Breezy" Brian Gregg.

"I became interested in the story and satire of Pastafarianism, so I wrote a song about it, and when I asked Henderson if I could use sections from *The Gospel of the Flying Spaghetti Monster* in the lyrics, he said it was OK, as the work was Creative Commons [CC]."

An alternative to restrictive copyright laws, CC has gained popularity as a way for not-for-profit media to be shared freely and without complication in the public domain. With written works, such as Henderson's *Gospel*, as well as more and more music being released under the CC banner, Gregg is quick to point out his own pioneering instincts in the advent of music sharing.

"I was way ahead of the curve with the release of *Electronic Busker* in



PREVIEW

FRI, JAN 30 (7:30 PM)  
"BREEZY" BRIAN GREGG  
WITH SCOTT COOK & THE LONG WEEKENDS  
FIDDLER'S ROOST (8906 - 99 ST),  
\$12 (ADVANCE) \$15 (DOOR)

1993. As music was becoming digitized into sequences of ones and zeros I began to question the point of CDs and LPs. I made a bunch of CDs and gave them all away with a note letting people know how to donate if they wanted to, as the Internet wasn't yet at the point where music files could be shared online."

GREGG'S UPCOMING show will celebrate a few aspects of Pastafarianism—besides everything happening on a Friday (the Sabbath for Pasta-

farians), the show will also feature a spaghetti dinner, as well as a video shoot, with audience members encouraged to don full pirate regalia.

"A belief of the Pastafarians is that the decrease of pirates in the world has led to global warming," laughs Gregg.

But maybe most significant to Gregg is the debut of his new band, as he will be joined for the first time onstage by his two sons.

"It's so great! I've been performing as a duo with my girlfriend Patsy Amico, and my sons suggested we try doing something all together. Moses has been playing bass for two and a half years, and my younger son Henry will be playing guitar. It's like a family band, and this show will be our proper debut. I couldn't be happier." ▽

# Life and crimes

15th century murderer inspired  
Cradle of Filth's latest album

BRYAN BIRTLES / bryan@vancouverweekly.com

For a band with as much theatricality as *Cradle of Filth*, it stands to reason that the group would put out an album that is as cinematic in scope as its latest release, *Godspeed on the Devil's Thunder*. A concept album about 15th century French nobleman Gilles de Rais, who fought alongside Joan of Arc before becoming one of history's most notorious serial killers, the record follows the arc of his life, his dabbles in alchemy and sorcery, his crimes and subsequent repentance.

"A lot of our songs are very gothic, so we like European folklore and mythology and tales of vampires and demons and so forth, and the two things are closely linked," explains singer Dani Filth of the band's subject matter. "It's a good versus evil thing—it is kind of Disney-esque in its basic story."

It is especially this good versus evil element, and the way de Rais was attracted to both sides at different points in his life, that intrigued Filth.

"You have to take into consideration that he was, at one point, as close to God as you could get—he was the protector of Joan of Arc, he

PREVIEW

SAT, JAN 31 (7 PM)  
CRADLE OF FILTH  
WITH SATYRICON, SEPTIC FLESH  
EDMONTON EVENT CENTRE, \$33.50 (ALL AGES)

supposedly communed with angels," says Filth. "He was also possibly the wealthiest man in Western Europe at the time and because he believed in her and loved her as an ideal, as a symbol of salvation, he threw huge venerations, huge passion plays in her honour that whittled down his fortune quite quickly, and then he got trafficking with alchemists and sorcerers who kind of took him for a ride really and promised him the rare philosophers' stone which transmutes base metals into gold—he was trying to replenish his coffers."

"So that's an interesting part of this and he died a martyr almost because he confessed his crimes and feared the ultimate penalty of excommunication which would mean his soul could never enter heaven, so he died seeking recompense and clemency from the church, so it's the overriding picture that we like, of this huge cinematic kind of story." ▽

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The drummer's place in the trio has been occupied by a few players, but in August 2008 the man in the band was back: Richie Fancher of Huevos Rancheros. Eve believes that a band can only be as good as its drummer, and she says that the change in players has also led to a subtle shift in sound for the band.

"The drummer we had before [Richie, [Ed Tregs], is the drummer for Zuckerbaby, and we had more of a rock 'n' roll, almost a Soul of Distortion kind of feeling, and Richie's playing is more low-key and laid-back," she explains. "Just the drumming style itself is more traditional, so less commercial-sounding and more bits of technical expertise and lots of great fills. Very, very tasty drummer." ▽

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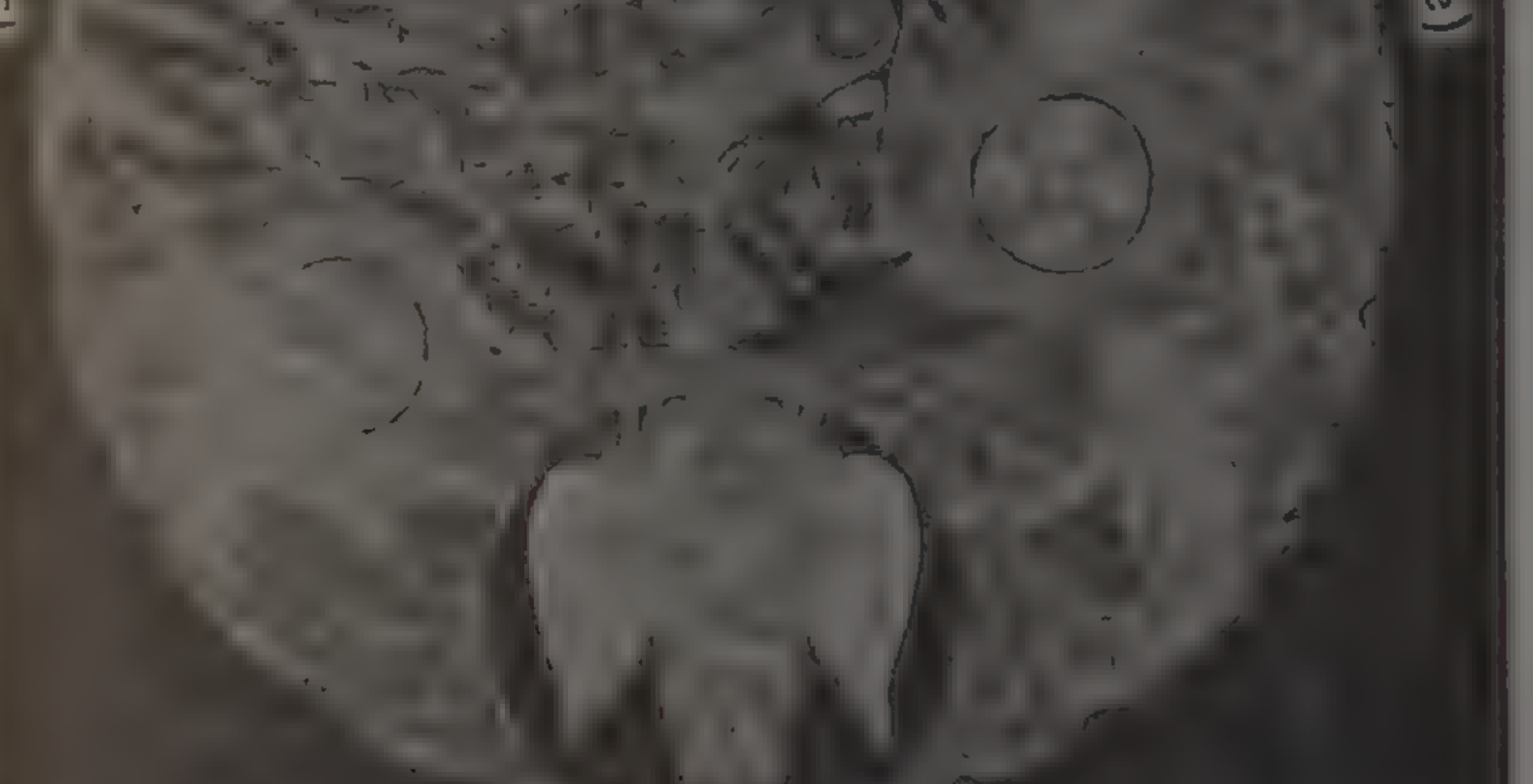
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REVIEWS

# NEW SOUNDS

**Antony and The Johnsons, *The Crying Light* (Secretly Canadian)**  
Edward O Wilson's biophilia hypothesis suggests that the bond between humans and nature is much deeper than an aesthetic appreciation. In Wilson's construction, love of nature, of the other living things on this planet, is bred into us through years of evolution, both because certain landscapes represent a safe haven and because sympathetic feelings towards other species can in turn help us survive. The reasons are slightly immaterial, though: the point is that humans are born to feel a reverence for and a connection to the natural world.

Such a theory might help explain the shift in focus of Antony Hegerty, the eponymous focal point of Antony and the Johnsons, on his latest album, *The Crying Light*. Normally one to turn his alien, utterly enrapturing voice to personal struggles—identity (particularly his own, transgendered identity), love, death—he looks out far more here, and the album is in one respect a long paean to nature's beauty by way of lamenting her slow destruction, rife with allusions to the natural world and stark realizations about what's happening to it.

And yet there's more here. Even if it is more concerned with the world around him, Antony still finds common threads with his usual fascinations. "Another World," the first single—also the title of a late-2008 EP—and stand-out track, is a direct, mournful plea for the beauty of the world, Antony singing "I need another world / This one's nearly gone" before listing the

myriad small, natural things he'll be sad to see go. But there are still echoes here of the yearning to fit in that has characterized a lot of Antony's work, to say nothing of the dirgey-but-reverent fatalism of a song like "Hope There's Someone." As much as Antony needs another physical world, he seems to need another psychological one, as well.

That same kind of dual longing is present in a song like "One Dove," as well. You could read it as from the perspective of some neo-Noah, longing for a signal of some unspoiled land, as from the perspective of a damaged, withdrawn outsider longing for peace.

Some of the best songs here, though, are when Antony more directly ties his themes together, and instead finds his salvation directly in nature. Album opener "Her Eyes Are Underneath the Ground" finds Antony trying to comfort both Mother Nature and himself with the beauty of a garden flower, while closer "Everglade" is almost a kind of ascent to the Garden of Eden, Antony openly admitting, with one of his more beautiful lines, that his "Limbs stop weeping for home" when he lies down in the titular glade.

That Antony explores all of this over orchestration that manages to be something like a forest clearing—evocative and emotional but sparse, keeping him in his strengths but allowing him room to roam within them—makes it all the better. It's often as beautiful as the natural world he's lamenting, a very fitting tribute. —DAVID BERRY / david@vuweekly.com



**Jeff Andrew, *Vagabonds & Wastrels* (Shade Tree)**  
Jeff Andrew's debut *Vagabonds & Wastrels* could have easily been called *Minstrels & Troubadours*—although that would have meant losing the play of "VW" in the rambling hobo songs. Andrew's

vivid lyrics conjure up the wanderer, the odd-job picker, the man or woman whose dreams are too big to be tied up in mortgages and the "right" schools. The easy strumming, underlined by fiddling, plays in washes of accordion and organ and soon you're sticking your thumb out on the Highway of Tears or sharing a bottle with Kerouac. From "Truck Stop Wall (Highway of Tears)" to "Wanderlust" the draw of the road is palpable, but so is the desire to find a place to call home. The push and pull of these opposing forces can make for a ragged soul, but they can also make for a complex album, one that not only tips its hat to Tom Waits and Utah Phillips but also asks them to sit down for a while. —CAROLYN NIKODYM / carolyn@vuweekly.com

**Dub Vulture, *Voodoo Love Nuke* (Independent)**  
There's plenty of dub reggae to be found on *Voodoo Love Nuke*. That makes a lot of sense for a band called Dub Vulture, I suppose, but what gives this album its edge is the way frontman Tim Bal-

ash draws from his past, weaving a little alt-country here (the rambling "Sharks in the Bathtub," with a tip of the hat to Jimmie Rodgers in the opening line, "T for Texas / T for Taliban") and a little punk there (the thrashing blast of "Monochrome"). For some bands, that sort of range could be a kiss of death, or at least an entranceway towards a herky-jerky sound that blows every which way but loose and any which way it can. Not so, for Dub Vulture, though, with the band—and it is a band, with original duo Balash and drummer Mike Silverman now joined by vocalists Amy Van Keeken and Brahm Ollivierre—very much rooted in the dusty earth at the same time as Van Keeken's voice adds an ethereal wave to the tunes, drifting seemingly out of the cloudy reverb and echoes that so much of the music is draped in. This is the sort of collision between styles that can gift an old style with new life. —EDEN MUNRO / eden@vuweekly.com

*Dub Vulture plays the Black Dog Mon, Feb 2 (8 pm)*

**Franz Ferdinand, *Tonight* (Domino)**  
The Archduke's favourite rock band returns for a third full-length and offers up more of, well, almost the same thing. The sound hasn't changed much, though there are a few tweaks here and there. The dependability is OK, if a little rote, when the songs are solid, as they are here. —EDEN MUNRO / eden@vuweekly.com



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04. the crying light antony & the johnsons	09. med sud... sigur ros
05. here & noun book v/a	10. african scream contest v/a



## AC Newman, *Get Guilty* (Last Gang)

At its heart, AC Newman's *Get Guilty* is a collection of pop songs—tightly written

with strongly defined melodies that etch themselves into the brain. Strip everything away and the songs would remain, Newman's

acoustic guitar driving most of the 12 tunes gathered here, be it the jaunty "Like a Hitman, Like a Dancer" or the subdued melancholy of "Young Atlantis." But it's in the added details, the additional instruments and sounds that colour Newman's tunes, that the record rises above simple singer-songwriter fare. There's the squeaking violin behind the hammering piano and electric guitar on "The Collected Works," and the distant, rattling drums on "Submarines of Stockholm," providing the songs with a larger soundscape and some added depth. Occasionally, though, the additions draw attention to the limitations found in some of the songs. On "Young Atlantis," horns and strings accompany Newman, following the same general path throughout. Though the instruments grow louder as the track progresses, the song itself seems unfinished, as though it wants to go someplace new but can't because Newman refuses to budge from his approach rather than introduce a new part or variation in the structure. Still, the vast majority of *Get Guilty* is made up of songs that beg for attention, and even those that fall slightly short are still constructed of bits and pieces that are deserving of a listen. —EDEN MUNRO / eden@vuwweekly.com

## Bruce Springsteen, *Working on a Dream* (Columbia)

For much of his career, Bruce Springsteen has offered up albums which are tied together by intent. There is usually a sense about each release that Springsteen is working towards some exact purpose, moving steadily and unerringly toward the end of the record. On *Working on a Dream*, though, it doesn't seem that way at all. From the driving violin that opens the record with "Outlaw Pete"—an eight-minute foray into a mythical tale of the titular character—to the lazy, hopeful strumming of the title track to the electric, apocalyptic blues of "Good Eye," Springsteen seems to be consumed by wanderlust here. The songwriter drifts from style to style, never hinting at where he might turn to next, sometimes even seeming as though he might abandon the current approach without hesitation. Some of it is excellent, while other parts are less fulfilling—"Surprise, Surprise" comes off like a throwaway ditty that would have been better left at home. None of this makes for the most consistent album that Springsteen has made, but it is an interesting one. —EDEN MUNRO / eden@vuwweekly.com

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## MUSIC OLD SOUNDS

EDEN MUNRO  
eden@vuwweekly.com

## Steve Earle and the Del McCoury Band, *The Mountain* (E-squared)

Originally released: 1999 Steve Earle is a songwriter who was distinctly country on his first couple of albums. The reality, though, is that those initial records are simply markers of a time when that "new country" sound was clamping its jaws on the Nashville music industry

and Earle was making only the sort of album that a label would let him make. His earlier work—documented in a Christmas Eve kitchen table jam session at songwriter Guy Clark's house in the film *Heartwork Highways*—was much more traditional in sound, with the new-fangled production slickness nowhere to be heard as he picked out an early song with just an acoustic guitar. And immediately after the 1986 and 1987 releases of *Guitar Town* and *Exit O*, respectively, Earle started mixing things up with everything from soul ballads to hard rock to punk

Over to the side of all of those styles, Earle was also working the traditional side of country—not the current kind, but the stuff that is rooted in the deep South and the increasingly distant past—and *The Mountain*, recorded alongside the Del McCoury Band, captures that on tape.

In the album's liner notes, Earle writes that his primary motive in recording the record was to achieve immortality: "I wanted to write just one song that would be performed by at least one band at every bluegrass festival in the world long after I have followed Mr Bill [Monroe] out of this world."

A lofty goal, to be sure, and a

decade is probably too soon to be judging the success of the venture. But one thing is certain: the 14 songs that Earle wrote for the project stand tall next to others in both the songwriter's catalogue and in the bluegrass world at large.

Of course, a considerable chunk of the credit should go to McCoury and his band, top-of-the-line bluegrass musicians who take Earle's songs and imbue them with an added authenticity, not to mention multiple layers of intertwining melodies that propel the tunes forward at the same time as they have the listener working to follow everything that's going on.

But it's Earle's songs that give the album its life, acting as blueprints for the band, and these are typical Earle works in that he commits himself to each song. From the night-

time sketch of "The Graveyard Shift" to "Harlan Man," a paean to coal miners, to a jaunt through the Battle of Gettysburg in "Dixieland," he delivers consistently strong tunes and lyrics, and digs in deep with a voice that is covered with the grit of years of life.

Of course, there are a few songs here that, while not exactly being throw-aways, certainly come close to being filler—the record's worth wouldn't be diminished much by the exclusion of "Yours Forever Blue" and "Carrie Brown"—but neither do they hurt the whole. And the best songs here—that is most of them—provide the backbone of a strong bluegrass album.

Out of print for several years, *The Mountain* is now back in circulation—but it was always well worth any effort involved in tracking it down. Will it go down in history, taking Earle with it? Maybe, maybe not, but either way, it's damn good shot at glory—something he's probably assured of anyway. ▽



## HAIRY QUICK SPINS

WHITEY HOUSTON  
quickspins@vuwweekly.com

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## EVENTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 780.428.2889  
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Deadline is Friday at 3 pm

### CLUBS/LECTURES

**THE AGE OF INEQUALITY: THE WAGES OF THE MARKET FUNDAMENTALISM** Engineering Teaching and Learning Complex E1-013, U of A. www.iweek.ualberta.ca • Evening Special Guest: Palagummi Sainath • Tue, Feb 3, 7:30-9pm • Free, Part of International Week

**AIKIKAI AIKIDO CLUB** 10139-87 Ave., Old Strathcona Community League, • Japanese Martial Art of Aikido • Every Tue 7:30-9:30pm; Thu 6-8pm

**AAA 12 STEP SUPPORT GROUP** Presbyterian Church basement, N. door, 6 Bernard Dr, Bishop St, Sir Winston Churchill Ave, St. Albert • For adult children of alcoholic and dysfunctional families • Meet Mondays including holidays, 7:30pm

**EARTH CHOCOLATE INVESTIGATE THE DARK SIDE OF THE WORLD'S MOST SEDUCTIVE SWEET** Alberta Teacher's Association, Barnett House, 142 St-109 Ave • Talk by Carol Off, part of the Food: Today, Tomorrow, Together conference • Fri, Jan 30, 6:30-8pm • \$30 at Earth's General Store

**EMERSON, FROM HERE AND FUTURE** Engineering Teaching and Learning Complex E1-013, www.iweek.ualberta.ca • Evening Panel with Dr Margaret-Ann Armour (moderator), Dr. Alex F McCalla and Jon Steinman • Wed, Feb 4, 7:30-9pm • Free, part of International Week

**CLUB DU SOLEIL** South East Edmonton Seniors Centre, 9350-82 St, 780.988.4144 • Singles dance • Sat, Jan 31, 8-9pm (dance lessons), 90m-1am (dance) • \$8 (member)/\$13 (guest)

**EDMONTON ESPERANTO SOCIETY** 10025-102A Ave, 780.702.5117 • Fri, noon-1pm • vaughn@sewardconsulting.com

**ENDING HUNGER, FEEDING PEOPLE** Union Building, U of A • Keynote address with Frances Moore Lappe • Mon, Feb 2, 12-1:20pm • Free, part of International Week

**FEAST AND FAMINE: HEALTH IMPACTS OF SCARCITY AND ABUNDANCE** Engineering Teaching and Learning Complex E1-013, U of A, www.iweek.ualberta.ca • Monday Evening Panel with David Morley, Dr. Arya Sharma and Dr. Noreen Willow, moderated by Linda Hughes • Mon, Feb 2, 7:30-9pm • Free, part of International Week

**THE FULLY DEFEATED: LIBERALISM IN A POST-NEOLIBERAL ERA** ETLC 1 003, U of A, www.ualberta.ca/PARKLAND/ • Lecture by Jane Kelsey • Tue, Feb 3, 7:30-9:30pm • Donation

**FOOD: TODAY, TOMORROW, TOGETHER: FOOD SECURITY CONFERENCE** Barnett House, 142 St, 109 Ave (Alberta Teacher's Assoc Bldg) • Conference to discuss food security issues in the province, featuring speakers Carol Off, Thomas Pawlick, Herb Barbolet, Elbert VanDonkersgoed and many others • Jan 29-31

**HEAL YOURSELF!** Unity Church of Edmonton, 13210-106 Ave • Film directed by Michael Goorjian • Fri, Feb 6, 6-7pm; Sun, Feb 8, 1pm • \$12

**INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON RESEARCH NEEDS AND THE WORLD FOOD CRISIS** Union Building Dinwoodie Lounge, U of A, www.iweek.ualberta.ca • Noon panel with guests from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the China College of Agricultural Policy, and the World Bank • Thu, Feb 5, 12:30-1:50pm • Free, part of International Week

**MCDUGALL UNITED CHURCH - MEN'S BREAKFAST** McDougall United Church, 10025-101 St • The Spiritually Healthy Man with speaker Rev. Dr. Neil Elford • Sat, Feb 7, 9-10:30am (pre-register by Jan 30) • \$8 at 780.428.1818, e-mail: DBell@mcdougallunited.com

**NORTHERN ODYSSEY** Metro Cinema, Citadel Theatre • Film premiere and lecture series with special guest Hugh Brody. A University of Alberta Centenary event, World premiere of *Inuit Odyssey* • Fri, Feb 6 • Free • **CBC Broadcast Centre**, Edmonton City Centre/Churchill Square: Panel Discussion *Meltdown How Inuit are Adapting to a Warming North*; Fri, Feb 6, 12-1:30pm Panel discussion with Albert Elias (Inuvialuit elder), Niobe Thompson and Hugh Brody (anthropologists/filmmakers), discuss the impact of a warmer Arctic on the Inuit. Moderated by Tiffany Burns • **Convocation Hall, U of A**: Keynote Lecture by Hugh Brody *Inuit Worlds: They Do Not Stay the Same*; Fri, Feb 6, 3:30-5pm • **Convocation Hall, U of A**: Screening of the documentary, *The Meaning of Life*, Fri, Feb 6, 7:30-9:30pm

**PECHA KUCHA NIGHT** Matrix Hotel, 10640-100 Ave • A forum for creative young Edmontonians to express their ideas • Thu, Feb 5, 6pm (door), 7pm (presentations) • \$6 at TIX on the Square

**REGIONAL GROWTH STRATEGIES** Edmonton Centre Suite Hotel, 10222-102 St • U of A Panel Discussion, learn about regional growth and regional planning • Tue, Feb 3, 7-8:30pm • Free; registration is required. crsc@ualberta.ca or 780.428.2889

**REVENUE NET ZERO ENERGY HOUSE**

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**SONGPOSIUM** Sutton Place Hotel, Rutherford Room, 10235-101 St • An intense one-day seminar for aspiring songwriters with panelists Jim Vallance, Anel Hyatt, Ryan Zimmerman • Sat, Jan 31, 8:30am-5pm • \$29 (adv AMIA member/SAC member)/\$39 (door); info at 1.866.456.7664, www.songwriters.ca/EVT10.php

**TRANSFERRING FEAST, FAMINE AND FRENZY** Myer Horowitz Theatre, Students' Union Bldg, www.iweek.ualberta.ca • Special Guest: George Monbiot presents his lecture *Transcending Feast, Famine and Frenzy* (via videoconference) • Wed, Feb 4, 12-1:20pm • Free

**WELCOME TO THE REEL WORLD** Civil Engineering Building (CEB) 325, www.iweek.ualberta.ca • Global issues film and speaker series • The Price of Aid • Wed, Feb 4 (International Week film), 5pm

**WHAT IS NEXT FOR COMMUNITY AND PRICES** Engineering Teaching and Learning Complex E1-013, www.iweek.ualberta.ca • International Week, Evening Panel: Dr. Alex McCalla • Thu, Feb 5, 7:30-9pm • Free

**WOMEN ONLY BICYCLE REPAIR** BikeWorks, 10047-80 Ave (enter through Back Alley), 780.433.2453 • Edmonton Bicycle Commuters' Society • (first and third Sundays of each month) Sun, Feb 1, 15 • Free

**WOMEN IN BLACK** In front of the Old Strathcona Farmers' Market • Silent vigil the 1st and 3rd Sat, 10-11am, each month, stand in silence for a world without violence

### COMEDY

**COMEDY FACTORY** Gateway Entertainment Centre, 34th Ave, Calgary Trail • Thu, 8:30pm; Sat, 8pm and 10pm • Chris Warren; Jan 29-31 • Jamie Hutchinson; Feb 5-7

**COMIC STRIP** Bourbon St, WEM, 780.483.5999, www.thecomicsstrip.ca • Hit or Miss Mondays: Each Mon • Best of Edmonton Tuesdays: Each Tue • David Merry, Tyler Hawkins and Paul Brown; until Feb 1

**LAUGH SHOP** 1105-6605 137 Ave, Londonderry Mall, 780.476.1010 • Wed-Sat 8pm; Fri-Sat 8pm and 10:30pm • Wed amateur night; 8pm • Andrew Grose; Thu, Jan 29, 8pm • Just For Laughs Showcase; Jan 30, 7pm • Andrew Grose; Jan 30, 31 • Jamie Kennedy in concert, Feb 6-7

**LION'S HEAD PUB** Radisson Hotel Edmonton South, 4440 Gateway Boulevard, 780.437.6010 • Comedy open mic night every Sun (9pm) hosted by Lars Callieou

### QUEER LISTINGS

**BOOTS BAR AND LOUNGE** 10242-106 St, 780.423.5014, www.bootsbar.ca • 2nd Thu: Illusions Social Club • 3rd Wed: Edmonton O Society • 2nd Tue: Edmonton Rainbow Business Association • Every Fri: Philosophy Café • Fri and Sat DJ SeXXy Sean 10-3 • Long Weekend Sundays feature the Stardust Lounge with Miss Bianca and Vanity Fair

**BUDDYS NITE CLUB** 11725B Jasper Ave, 780.488.7736 • Nightly 9pm-3am, Fri 8-3pm • Sun: Rotating drag shows with Mz Bianca and Mz Vanity Fair in The Stardust Lounge and GoDiva and Donnatella NE1 in The GoDonna Show, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Mon: Amateur strip contest with Mia Fellow, midnight, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Tue: Free pool and tourney, DJ Arrowchaser • Wed: Hump day with DJ SeXXy Sean • Thu: Wet underwear contest with Mia Fellow, midnight, DJ WestCoastBabyDaddy • Fri: We made 'em famous! DJ Eddy Toonflash, come early to avoid lineup, no cover before 10pm • Sat: Undie night for men only, free pool and tourney, DJ Arrowchaser

**EDMONTON PRIDE TIMERS (EPT)** Union Church of Edmonton, 10804-119 St • A group of older gay men and their admirers who have common interests meet the 2nd Sun, 2:30pm, most months for a social period, a short meeting and a guest speaker, discussion panel or a potluck supper. Special interest groups meet for other activities throughout the month. email edmontonpt@yahoo.ca, www.primetimerswww.org/edmonton

**RELE SPORTS AND RECREATION** Edmonton.ca • Women's Drop-In Recreational Badminton; Oliver School Gym, 10227-118 St, 780.465.3620; Wed, 6-7:30pm • Bootcamp; Lynnwood Elementary School at 15451-84 Ave; Mon, 7-8:15pm; bootcamp@teamedmonton.ca • Bowling; Gateway Lanes, 100, 3414 Gateway Blvd; Sat, 5-7pm; bowling@teamedmonton.ca • Curling; Mon, 7:15-9:15pm, Granite Curling Club; 780.463.5942 • Running; Sun, Tue, Thu; running@teamedmonton.ca • Swimming; NAIT pool, 11762-106 St; Tue, 8-9pm, Thu, 7:30-8:30pm; swimming@teamedmonton.ca • Volleyball; Tue Recreational; Mother Teresa Elementary School at 9008-105A, 8-10pm; Thu intermediate; Amiskwacy Academy, 101 Airport Rd, 8-10pm; recvolleyball@teamedmonton.ca, volleyball@teamedmonton.ca • YOGA (Hatha); Free Yoga; every Sun, 2-3:30pm; Korezone Fitness, 203, 10575-115 St; yoga@teamedmonton.ca

**KOREZONE FITNESS FOR VEGANS • LIVING POSITIVE** 404, 10408-124 St, www.edmivingpositive.ca, 1.877.975.9448/780.488.5768, • Providing confidential peer support to people living with HIV • Tue, 7-9pm. Support group • Daily drop-in, peer

counselling

**MAKING WAVES SWIMMING CLUB** www.geocities.com/makingwaves\_edm • Recreational and competitive swimming with coaching, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices • Every Tue, Thu

**PLAY NIGHTCLUB** 10220-103 St, www.playnightclub.ca • Open Thu, Fri, Sat • The first bar for the queer community to open in a decade with DJs Alex Brown and Eddie Toonflash

**PLAG** Pride Centre, 9540-111 Ave • A support group for parents and friends of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people • Meet the 1st Wed each month September-June, 7-9pm; T: Rub, 780.436.1998 after 6pm; E: edmontonab@plag-canada.ca

**PRIDE CENTRE OF EDMONTON** 9540-111 Ave, 780.488.3234, www.pridecentreofedmonton.org • Open Tue-Fri 1-10pm, Sat 2-6:30pm • LGBT Seniors Drop-in: Every Tue/Thu, 2-4pm • CA: Every Thu (7pm) • Sut Up and Show Up: AA big book study group meet every Sat, noon • Youth Understanding Youth: Youth up to 25 years, support and social group meet every Sat, 7-9pm; yuy@shaw.ca • Womonspace Board meeting 1st Sun each month, 10:30am-12:30pm • Trans Education/Support Group: Meet 1st and 3rd Sun, 2-4pm, of each month, www.alberta.trans.org • Men Talking with Pride: Every Sun (7pm) facilitator: Rob Wells robwells780@hotmail.com • HIV Support Group: Meet the 2nd Mon of each month, 7pm • Transgender, Transsexual, Intersex Questioning (TTIQ) Alliance: Support meeting the 2nd Tue each month, 7:30pm • Transgender, Transsexual Intersex and Questioning. Education, advocacy and support for men, women and youth; PFLAG Edmonton Meet the 1st Wed each month, 7pm • Free short term, solution-focused drop-in counseling; every Wed, 7-10pm • YouthSpace: drop-in for LGBTQ youth up to 25; Tue-Sat, 3-7pm

**ROBERTSON-WESLEY UNITED CHURCH** 123 St, 780.482.1587, www.rwuc.org • Soul OUTing an LGBT-focused alternative worship • 2nd Sun each month, 7pm; worship Sun, 10:30am; people of all sexual orientations welcome. A LGBT monthly book club and film night. Info email jravenscroft@rwuc.org

**ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH** 11526-76 Ave, 780.436.1555 • People of all sexual orientations are welcome • Every Sun (10am worship)

**WOMONSPACE** 780.482.1794, www.womonspace.ca, womonspace@gmail.com • A Non-profit lesbian social organization for Edmonton and surrounding area. Organized monthly activities from dances, games nites, golf tournament, etc. Monthly newsletter and reduced rates included with membership. Confidentiality assured

**WOODYS** 11723 Jasper Ave, 780.488.6557 • Open Daily (noon) • Sat-Tue Karaoke with Tizzy and Pat • Sat-Sun Pool Tournaments

### SPECIAL EVENTS

**CHINESE NEW YEAR OF THE RAT CARNIVAL** City Centre Mall, 102 St-102 Ave, Lower Level, West Food Court by the Bay • Featuring drumming, musical instruments, traditional dances, dragon dance, lion dance, hip hop dance, martial arts performances, Carnival games, demos, calligraphy. Traditional Chinese costume fashion show. Live presentation to set a record for the largest Chinese painting in North America by Edmonton Public School Chinese Bilingual Students • Sat, Jan 31, 11am-4pm

**FLAVOURS OF ICE'S MARAMAXA BLEND WINE FUNDRAISER** Winspear Centre • Edmonton Symphony Orchestra's wine-tasting fundraiser • Jan 30, 7-10pm (wine tasting/auction) • \$130 at the Winspear box office

**INTERNATIONAL WEEK** U of A campus • www.iweek.ualberta.ca • Hungry for Change Transcending Feast, Famine and Frenzy • Feb 2-6 • Free • Feb 6 Evening Concert: Features award winning aboriginal artist Fara Palmer and high-energy female fronted Reggae band Souljah Fyah

**KENYA CERAMIC PROJECT: WINTER GALA** A Faculty Club, 11435 Saskatchewan Dr, 780.264.0180 • Fundraising gala featuring speakers from the U of A and the Faculty of Medicine, as well as participants from KCP, musical entertainment, a meal • Fri, Jan 30, 7pm

**ROBERT BURNS' 250TH BIRTHDAY** Banquet Hall, 3223 Parsons Rd • Entertainment by St. James Gate, Scottish Dancing and silent auction • Sat, Jan 31, 5pm (door), 6pm (dinner) • Tickets available at Scottish Imports 780.433.6889, Up Yer Kilt Scottish Gifts 780.265.4577

**ROYAL BISHOP CRAFT AND ART FAIR** Strathcona Performing Arts Centre, 8426 Gateway Blvd • Feb 7-8, 10am-5pm • \$2

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## ARIES (MAR 21 - APR 19)

Don't tell me you have nothing to be thankful for, Aries. Your parents could have named you "Hooligan" or "Lightsaber" or "Flu," and they didn't. There are no photos floating around the Internet that show you riding a pig in the nude. No one has ever broken up with you via text message. Now please keep going in the direction I've pointed you. Count your blessings up to at least 101. Create an ongoing list of all the things in your life that work pretty well and make you feel at home in the world. Why do this now? Because it's Massive Explosions of Gratitude Week for you—a time when you can attract even more good fortune into your life by aggressively identifying the good fortune you already enjoy.

## TAURUS (APR 20 - MAY 20)

Sometimes a great idea whose time has come springs up in two or more places at once. In the 1850s, for instance, Charles Darwin and Alfred Russell Wallace independently happened upon some of the key concepts of evolution. And in the 1840s, mathematicians Urbain Le Verrier and John Couch Adams virtually duplicated each other's predictions of the previously unknown planet Neptune, although they knew nothing about each other's work. I suspect a similar phenomenon is about to happen in your own sphere, Taurus. Act fast if you'd like to get as much credit as you deserve, like Darwin and Le Verrier, and not suffer the fate of Wallace and Adams, whose efforts were more invisible.

## GEMINI (MAY 21 - JUN 20)

Before she died at the age of 101, photographer Ruth Bernhard attributed her longevity to her restlessness. "Never get used to anything," she advised. I recommend that approach to you right now, Gemini. You're in a phase of your astrological cycle when thinking big and wild and free will be rewarded. To improve your physical health and boost your mental hygiene, unfamiliarize yourself with the people and things you've grown accustomed to. Sneak away from your habits. Disrupt and tamper with your normal responses. Find good excuses to be unpredictable.

## CANCER (JUN 21 - JUL 22)

"We are all stupid," wrote Mark Twain, "just on different subjects." Ain't that the truth? Sometimes I get overwhelmed when I think about all the blanks in my education and the ignorance that pockmarks my understanding. The good news for me—and for all of you, my fellow Cancerians—is that we're now in an astrological phase that's ideal for getting a crash course in any subject we're dumb about. If you're brave and humble, you could fix several holes in your intelligence.

## LEO (JUL 23 - AUG 22)

You should definitely not attempt to re-route a mighty river anytime soon. I don't recommend trying to change the location of a mountain, either, or commanding the wind to obey you, or shooting a flaming arrow at the sun. On the other hand, it wouldn't be a bad idea to turn one of your so-called liabilities into an asset or use a stumbling block as a shield. And you might have pretty good luck if you try to convert

an adversary into an ally or move sideways in order to advance your pet cause. In conclusion, Leo, seek modest gains that involve reversals and switcheroos.

## VIRGO (AUG 23 - SEP 22)

"If you removed all of the homosexuals and homosexual influence from what is generally regarded as American culture," said author Fran Lebowitz, "you would pretty much be left with [the TV game show] *Let's Make A Deal*." That's an exaggeration, of course, but it contains a large grain of truth. I offer this as a prod for you to deepen your understanding of the complexities of gender, Virgo. Astrologically speaking, it's an excellent time to do so. If you identify yourself as a heterosexual, meditate on the qualities you express that are commonly thought of as the specialty of the opposite sex. Consider the possibility that you are actually 65 per cent female, 25 per cent male and 10 per cent neither, or maybe 15 per cent female, 70 per cent male and 15 per cent transgender. If you regard yourself as gay, explore the hypothesis that a part of you is secretly kind of straight. Open your mind to the possibility that human beings come in hundreds of different genders.

## LIBRA (SEP 23 - OCT 22)

Poet Jack Spicer was a native Californian who wrote most of his poetry while living in the San Francisco Bay Area. He did, however, spend a short time on the East Coast. "Like most primitive cultures," he reported after returning home, "New York has no feeling for nonsense." I don't agree with that assessment. Some of the best nonsense I ever experienced transpired during a November night in 2005 on New York's West 23 Street. In any case, Libra, your assignment in the coming week is to avoid primitive environments that have no feeling for nonsense. You need a maximum dose of silly, goofy, loopy bursts of diversion. I promise it'll make you both smarter and wiser.

## SCORPIO (OCT 23 - NOV 21)

Your world is going to get very wet in the coming days. At least I hope it will. There are wrong moves you could make that would keep things pretty dry, or else move you away from the imminent deluge. But I hope you will go with the cosmic flow and allow yourself to get the full benefit of the replenishing flood. In my astrological opinion, you need to feel the deep moisture that's beyond language. You need to be carried along in the fertile surge and returned to the source of your emotional life.

## SAGITTARIUS (NOV 22 - DEC 21)

"If your actions speak louder than words," rants TV pundit Stephen Colbert, "then you're not yelling loudly enough." That's a funnier variant of the advice I have for you, Sagittarius, which is as follows: The coming week is a time for crafty talk, not impulsive deeds; a time for intense discussion, not brash exploits. Engaging in almost any kind of negotiation, even if it's heated and convoluted, is better than leaping into an adventure prematurely. It's my opinion that you and yours will have to express a lot of ideas and feelings in order to uncover the understandings that should be at the root of your next moves.

## CAPRICORN (DEC 22 - JAN 19)

Studies suggest that one out of every 10 men and one out of every 20 women carry around an excess of anger—so much so

that they're capable of damaging property in an outburst. If you're one of these rageaholics, Capricorn, you now have a window of opportunity to calm way, way down. The cosmos is conspiring to relieve you of a significant amount of your chronic aggravation. And even if you're not among the world's most furious people, I hope you will take advantage of this grace period. You have the power to purge at least 20 per cent of the ever-simmering agitation that you accept as normal. How to begin? Meditate on what it would mean for you to love yourself better.

## AQUARIUS (JAN 20 - FEB 18)

"The seed cannot sprout upwards without simultaneously sending roots into the ground," says an ancient Egyptian proverb. Keep that thought in mind as you head into the thick of your new phase of growth, Aquarius. What part of you needs to deepen as you rise up? What growth needs to unfold in the hidden places as you gravitate toward the light? How can you go about balancing and stabilizing your ascension with a downward penetration?

## PISCES (FEB 19 - MAR 20)

According to Harper's Index, an Iowa farmer can generate an annual revenue of \$300 per quarter acre by growing corn to produce ethanol. If the farmer instead puts a wind turbine on that same patch of land, however, he could earn \$10 000 per year. I urge you to meditate on that scenario as a metaphor for your own life, Pisces. Are you underutilizing one of your resources? Are you failing to fully capitalize on your potentials? Have you accepted a low-yield reward in a situation that could bring you much, much more? If so, what are you going to do about it? ♡

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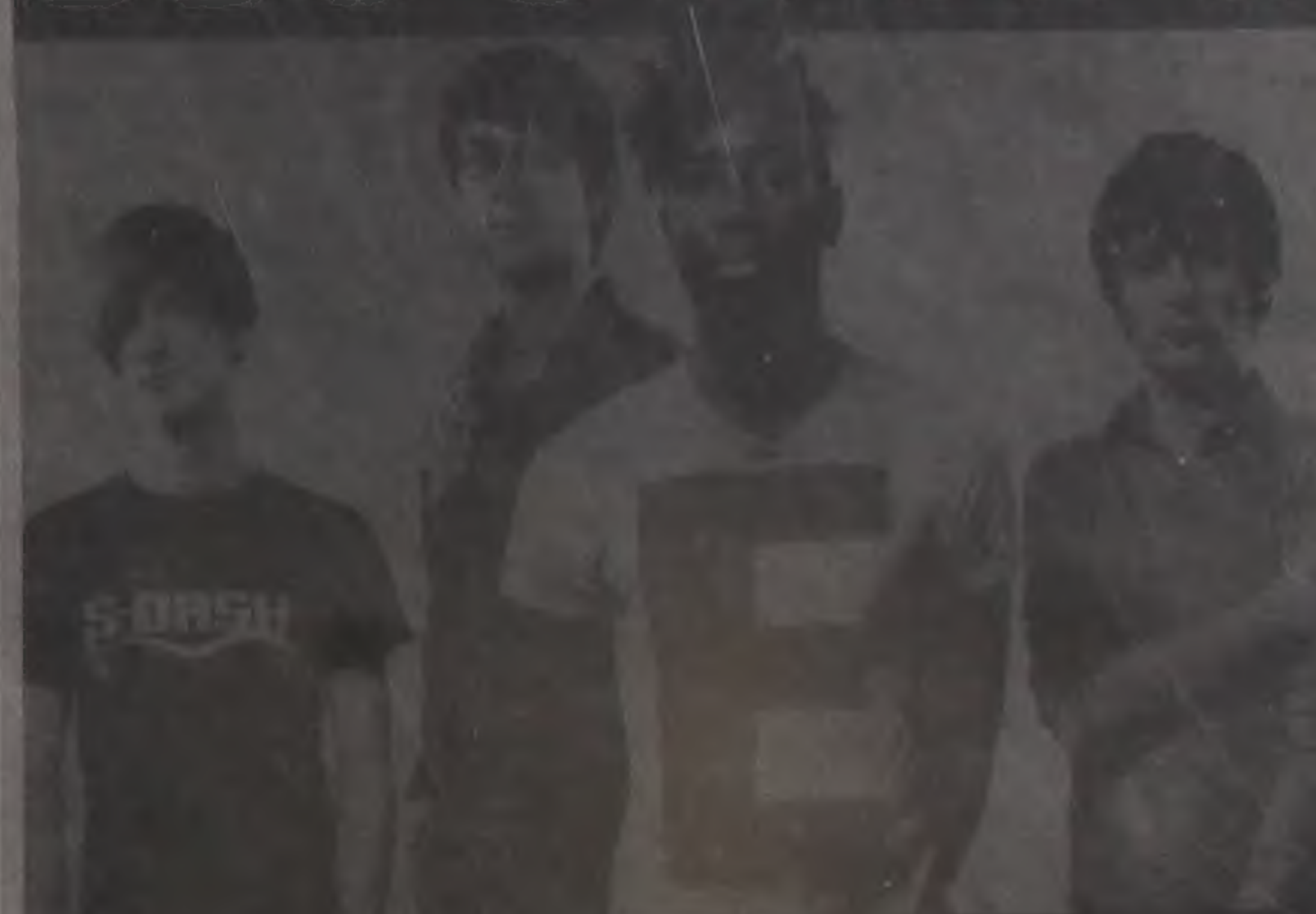
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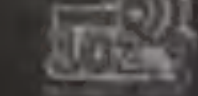
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# The L stands for lame

**1981 QUEERMONTON**  
TAMARA GORZALKA  
tam@vuwweekly.com

I have dedicated as little of this column space as possible to *The L Word* in the year and a half that I've been writing. This may not seem like a hard task but to a lesbian in my age bracket, it's an immeasurable feat. This show, this terrible, terrible show, seems to define dyke culture as it is right now even though most people are finally willing to admit that it has no business being on anyone's television.

Here is your spoiler warning. I will be discussing story tidbits from the upcoming sixth and final season of the show. The big "twist" is revealed in the first episode so I won't be ruining much, but you may not want to read too closely if you want to watch the season with virgin eyes. You

really won't be missing much, I promise. Here are seven reasons to skip *The L Word*.

## PAM GRIER AS SASSY-BLACK-STEREOTYPE

Apparently it's 1978 in *L Word* Los Angeles because Pam Grier is still playing her black-splottation characters from three decades ago. Grier is, by all accounts, one of the smartest and most sensitive members of the cast. So one has to wonder why the vast majority of her lines amount to "Girl, please!" or "Mhmm." Last year they really amped up the action with her frustrated character securing a gun and almost shooting a business rival, before leaving the weapon lying around so that her niece could almost shoot them both. Way to take those misconceptions about black people and squash 'em.

## EVERYONE CHEATS

Why would anyone date anyone else on

this show? You know you're signing up to be messed around on when your girlfriend meets a hot realtor, her ex-girlfriend, best friend, a patron at the bar or another ex-girlfriend. Kind of like lesbian real life, so why watch it on television?

## LESBIAN CLOUE

The final season is being told in reverse chronological order, starting with the murder of a main character. Arguably the main character. Oh I'm sorry, I didn't realize I was watching *The CSI Word*.

## WASTED TALENT

The actors of *The L Word* are amazing, that is without question. Slightly more unsung are the directors who have included big names like Kimberly Pierce (Boy Don't Cry), Jamie Babbit (But I'm a Cheerleader) and Angela Robinson (D.E.B.S.). The talent pool going on is fan-

tastic. Maybe someone should spend some of that cash on the writing staff.

## THE SPIN-OFF

For some reason, *The L Word* is getting a spin-off show. Titled *The Farm*, it will follow Leisha Hailey's character Alice as she goes to jail. I'm willing to give the creators credit that they're trying to recapture more the success of UK women's jailhouse drama *Bad Girls* than *Caged Heat*. But it's *The L Word*. I can't really be sure. And *The L Word* is recycling its own storyline. Two years ago it sent spoiled rich brat turned prostitute Helena Peabody to jail.

Announcing before your murder mystery themed final season even starts that your spin-off is going to involve a prison and one main character from the previous show? Well gee, I wonder who the heck this murder could possibly be pinned on.

## WHEN BUTCH ISN'T BUTCH

Kate Moennig is a sexy, sexy lady. Her shaggy hair, vintage tees and suit jackets or vests have inspired every other woman that you see at Play. There is no denying

Shane's cult status. But she isn't butch. She's never been butch.

Neither is Rose Rollins, the second "butch" character to join the regular cast. She's in the army. She drives a motorcycle. Could every single woman who's ever gone to Prism probably beat her down with a well-placed glance? Probably.

Maybe *The L Word* should've hired some of the actual butch-ish woman who like woman in Hollywood. There are a couple. I hear Clea Duvall is available.

## STUNT CASTING

Bizarre casting on this show has already used Marlee Matlin, Cybil Chepard, Alexandra Hedison (Ellen's girlfriend before Portia de Rossi), Elizabeth Keener, Alan Cumming, Rosanna Arquette and Sandra Bernhard. This season one can expect Lucy Lawless (Xena!) pleasing fans and further solidifying her lesbian icon status as she joins the show as a cop.

And there's a Paris Hilton rumour that I don't really want to talk about. Oh, *The L Word*, you jumped the shark before you ever began. ▀

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**Audition: Feb 1-2**, please contact Carla Rugg 780.264.6606 or Frank Zotter 780.474.6993

Songposium: Songwriters Association of Canada. A one-day seminar for songwriters and those interested in learning more about the art, craft and business of songwriting with Jim Vallance, Ariel Hyatt, Ryan Zimmerman. Sutton Place Hotel (Rutherford Room), 10235-101 St. Sat, **Jan 31**, 8:30am-5pm; \$29 (AMIA/SAC members adv)/\$39 (AMIA/SAC members door). For more information, call 1.866.456.7664 or go to [www.songwriters.ca/EVT10.php](http://www.songwriters.ca/EVT10.php)

The Bounce Gradfest '09: Open-call Audition: Search for Edmonton's Top Dancers! Sun, Feb 1, 10am at the NewCap Radio Stage, WEM. [www.edmontongradfest.com](http://www.edmontongradfest.com) for registration forms

Icon hair gallery (downtown) is looking for artists to showcase their work on our walls. Photos, prints, paintings, personal expression, contact Serai @ 780.426.1021

Bullet Productions needs actors with good improv skills for ongoing plays. Good pay, no rehearsals and lots of fun. Contact Darcy 780.203.1712

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**The Works Festival—Calls to Enter** • Churchill Square 2009 Artisan Market and Food Street Vendors. Reduced rates if you apply by Feb. 15, 2009. Contact [dawn@theworks.ab.ca](mailto:dawn@theworks.ab.ca) for more info. **Deadline: Apr. 15, 2009** • Churchill Square 2009 Street Stage. **Deadline: Feb. 15, 2009** • 2011 exhibit **Deadline: Aug. 25, 2009** • 2nd Annual Chalk Art Contest. Prizes are awarded on Canada Day, base your entry on the 2009 Festival theme HEAT! **Deadline: June 1, 2009** • 2nd Annual Smaller than a Breadbox. Base your entry on the 2009 Festival theme HEAT! **Deadline: May 1, 2009** • Download applications at [www.theworks.ab.ca](http://www.theworks.ab.ca)

Writers Guild of Alberta & PEN Canada. [www.writersguild.ab.ca/www.pencanada.ca](http://www.writersguild.ab.ca/www.pencanada.ca). Call for Applications, Edmonton Writer in Exile Committee, Residency 2009-2010. **Deadline: Feb 12**. Send resume, list of publications and letter of interest to: Anna-Marie Klassen, Fiction Librarian, Edmonton Public Library, Centre for Reading & the Arts, 7 Sir Winston Churchill Square, Edmonton, AB, T5J 2V4 T: 780.496.7032/E: [aklassen@epl.ca](mailto:aklassen@epl.ca)

Steeps—Old Glenora: for open mic—Spoken word First Thursday every month. Contact Adam Snider to sign up [adam.snider@gmail.com](mailto:adam.snider@gmail.com)

### MUSICIANS

Female fronted semi-pro cover band seeks bass or guitar oriented musician with gear. Rock/pop from the '80s to modern. Experience a must. E: [audition.for.cover.band@gmail.com](mailto:audition.for.cover.band@gmail.com) to arrange audition

I've travelled the world with my sax. I seek an experienced fem musician/vocalist, 50-60, for local gigs and possible internat'l travel. Ross 780.707.3979

Aggressive rock band Get Bent, seeking 2nd guitarist to complete 4 piece pro-level project. If you're serious about playing and gigging, call 780.418.2214

Bass player and lead guitarist wanted. Infl: thrash, death metal, and new wave of american metal. Practice Weds and weekends. Have some material written already. All are welcome to come out, we are in Hobbema. Contact fb71272@hotmail.com or 780.585.2643 for more info

Bass player wanted to relocate to Medicine Hat to play in various new metal/rock project with Hart Bachmier of Disciples of Power. 25-35 yrs. Must have long hair; serious inq only. 403.504.5135

WANTED: JAMMERS for open public monthly jam on the second Sunday of the month at 9119 128A ave. Rock, country & old time music. Ph. 780.973.5593, [randyglen@JumpUpDj.com](mailto:randyglen@JumpUpDj.com)

Alberta Music Industry Association's call for submissions from Alberta Artists to submit a professional quality recording for a promotional music sampler. **Deadline: Jan 30, 4:30pm**. [www.amia.ca/cms/](http://www.amia.ca/cms/) for info

### VOLUNTEER

Volunteer website for youth 14-24 years old. [www.youthvolunteer.ca](http://www.youthvolunteer.ca)

Bring laughter, smiles and simple delights to child and back into your life! **Be a Big Brother or Big Sister Today!** Call 780.424.8181. Remember you

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altsex@altsexcolumn.com

### DEAR READERS:

A few weeks ago, writing, I guess, about the sensation created by the release of the "bonding hormone," oxytocin, at orgasm, I attracted the attention of a dear friend and major geek, whom we will call Bill. His wife is, um, Bachael. "Bachael and I have long been fans of the 'warm gooey' feelings (as you so aptly described them) created by sex," wrote Bill. "Turns out: you can get these feelings from your partner cooking you a really, really good meal, too. Who knew?"

"Oh yeah?" I responded. "Is there research?"

So he sent this:

R\_\_\_\_g, B., "The Way To A Man's

Heart: Field Trial of a New Stuffing Recipe", Journal of Warm Goopy Feelings, Vol. 12, No. 11, November 2008, p. 23.

### Abstract:

Subject (n=1, a 43-year-old domesticated male) was conditioned with ethanol and fed an experimental diet consisting of stuffing and baked chicken to examine changes in behavior and neurochemistry. The chicken diet had been previously tested on the subject with good results but the stuffing was novel to this laboratory and was created as published in [1]. Subject exhibited postprandial narcolepsy and went to sleep at 8:15 p.m. while muttering endearments to his wife.

[1] "Italian Chard Stuffing", Sunset, November 2008, p. 79.

Hey, I thought it was funny. You don't have to. Bill also sent along an article from *The New York Times* (nytimes.com/2008/11/24/us/24sex.html) which I had read and meant to get to,

but I have a mind like a box of monkeys recently so who knows where it went. It was about a pastor in Texas who assigned his married parishioners seven days of warm gooeyness:

Mr Young, an author, television host and the pastor of the evangelical Fellowship Church, issued his call for a week of "congregational copulation" among married couples on November 16 while pacing in front of a large bed.

Since I don't believe in God I ought to find the idea of tucking up under the covers with him no more discomfiting than cuddling up with the Easter Bunny or Harvey or any other invisible rabbit, and yet, I do. And then again if you're comfortable with making room for invisible rabbits or comfortably capable of ignoring that part of the plan, the pastor is indubitably right. More sex does make for more intimacy, which does make for a better marriage or marriage-equivalent (you'll notice that

these are not included in the prescription).

"If you've said, 'I do,' do it," he said. As for single people, "I don't know, try eating chocolate cake," he said. Lamely, if you ask me. But of course it is not the job of a pastor in Texas to address the relationship-maintenance issues of the sin-living and the homo-seksual. It's mine, though, and at the risk of pointing out the tediously obvious, the same goes for all persons of coupledness.

The article cannot help but mention two books I'd been meaning to get to, along with all the rest of this stuff, *365 Nights: A Memoir of Intimacy* and *Just Do It*, competing memoirs by members of married couples who agreed to have sex every night for a specified period (a solid year for the Mullers and 101 days for the Browns). Both couples claim that getting a book out of it never crossed their minds at first, and despite my generally jaundiced view of anyone you find relating the super-intimate details of their lives on daytime TV, I do believe them. It's tempting but probably unfair to lump the Browns and the Mullers in with stunt-memoirists like AJ Jacobs,

who first read the entire *Encyclopedia Britannica* and then followed every commandment in the Bible for a year, or Morgan Spurlock, who did the gross stunt with the McDonalds diet. And while Jacobs shaved his beard and went back to wearing mixed fibres (and forgot most of what he learned from the encyclopedia) and Spurlock de-supersized himself and shudders when he passes the Golden Arches, both couples report greater intimacy and more (although, of course, also less) sex in the aftermath of their experiments. The Browns, especially, also reported being really, really tired.

Both books and all the participants may be eminently mockable (they are all extremely perky and easy to imagine singing medleys of Christmas songs while wearing matching turtle-necks) but they are not stupid, and it's not so easy to mock the results. And while I will never get a book contract for *Twice A Week, OK?: the Warm-gooeyness Method will Save your Relationship*, I can at least try to sell it here. Hell, I may try it myself. But if I do, you won't hear about it.

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